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THE LEAGUE FIASCO

Translated by
MRS. N. MACFARLANE

THE LEAGUE FIASCO

(1920-1936)

VICTOR MARGUERITTE



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PREFACE

THIS outline of history represents the work of fifteen years of observation and study. It would have been easy for me to build it up on a massive foundation of references. My notes and bibliography alone would have filled more than one octavo volume. But I have chosen instead to write for the general reader. My aim has been to produce a clear and yet solid book, which has no party bias whatever but is addressed to all the multitudes who want to live and work in peace. I would wish that every voter, every candidate, soldiers of the past and of the future, wives and mothers, teachers of both sexes—in a word, all those who hate war and are determined that it shall never come to pass again—I would wish that all these should read these pages which I have written for them and which I dedicate to them.

Let there be no misunderstanding of the title I have chosen. Granted that it states a fact, but it is also a note of mourning. Above all, it is a call to revolt, to a revolt against the order of things which is leading us inevitably to the abyss. This time the old world will perish in it. The Black and Yellow Races—how gladly would I see them treated as brothers—would then have the field to themselves, thanks to the idiotic suicide of the White Races.

This book is also an essay in construction. It voices hope; it is an act of faith in the intelligence and determination of the nations. For it is on them it depends whether collective

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security remains an illusion and indivisible peace a phrase or not. How can people talk of the United States of the World while there are Disunited States in Europe? Peace first! This is the *sine qua non* of a New League of Nations. Were this condition realized the new League would start afresh, after a period of sterility, along the highway of human progress.

Some of my friends may be surprised that I say so little about our own internal politics in France, and that I have treated the entanglement of foreign affairs and the dangers of excessive nationalism, and that only. They may be offended by some of the expressions used in this book; but they must not believe for an instant that I am in any way unfaithful to the Rassemblement Populaire. I am not a Communist, but I belong without reservation to the French section of the International Association of Revolutionary Authors and Artists. My friends may be certain that if I differ from them in opinion on some points, yet I remain in full communion with them in the worship of the same ideal. After the War I wrote my book *Au Bord du Gouffre* in the character of a historian, and since then I have published twenty books which bear witness to my beliefs. It is in the character of a historian that I am writing now to show to all the world how close we are to the reopening of the abyss.

This book will not provide arguments against the principle of the League of Nations. The actual inability of the League is due to her original handicaps, which have clogged her as growth can be clogged by a stifling climate and *milieu*. And yesterday's defeat can be redeemed by the victories of to-morrow.

This book expresses a single passion—the love of a France

PREFACE

identified with international solidarity, and with good understanding between *all* European nations as a starting point.

I shall soon be seventy years old; I expect nothing from anyone. I am well aware of what I am doing; it is painful; but once more I must do my duty, which is to defend what I believe to be true.

All my predictions during the last fifteen years have come true: the failure of the *Status Quo*, the uprising of Germany from her humiliation, the breakdown of the Disarmament Conference, the advent of Hitler and his claims.

I stand as the watchman at the prow of the vessel. I gave warning of Charybdis, and now I give warning of Scylla, with the one and only aim—that the Ship of Humanity freighted with the hope of the world, may avoid supreme shipwreck. May it gain the high seas and strike a bold course towards the country of its dreams!

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PART I

A GREAT HOPE

"Hatred may never be appeased by hatred; but much by love."
—INDIAN PROVERB.

CHAPTER I

THE BIRTH OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

I—THE INCARNATION OF A DREAM—A THOUSAND YEARS OF THOUGHT

THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS, the rule of arbitration, the sovereignty of peace creating the works of Peace! Such is the dream which generations of men have pursued with untiring hope, from the dawn of history throughout centuries of bloody warfare. It is the green branch which the dove from the Ark bore across the waste of waters on the day when the rainbow appeared. A vision, an Annunciation, a Bird of God, appearing, perching for a moment at many different times throughout the confused chronology of the ages, then, with a flash of wings, vanishing . . .

Here and there, throughout the stormy history of Jewish thought (stormy though it be), this vision reappears as well in the dreams of Isaiah as in the Passion of Christ. It is found among the dark shadows of the fierce Lord of Hosts, it is found in the light of the Messiah. "There shall be no more war," the son of Isaac foretells, "neither for attack nor for defence, but all nations shall work together in every civilized land."

Through His Apostles Jesus taught the Supreme Law: "Thou shalt not kill," and gave the eternal command "Love one another."

From Jerusalem to faraway Korea, throughout ancient

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Asia, this same pursuit of the inner light filled Chaldean and Babylonian tradition, the tradition of the Parsees, the tradition of the Vedas. Cakia Mouni, the Gentle Sage, carried the serene creed of Buddha from the heart of India to the heart of China. In Taoism and Confucianism, Lao Tsaou and Kong Tsaou preached the loftiest creed which the world has yet known.

When Tsaou spoke of the third stage of evolution, did he not foresee the reign of Peace, the period of widespread equality? In describing it, he says: "The whole world will be one single unity and the personality of the individual will attain its greatest development. Then the whole world will be one great republic, the Republic of the Human Race."

This vision was much wider even than that of the Sages of Greece—Orpheus whose songs moved even the animal creation; Pythagoras whose golden verses gave life to human reason; Empedocles who desired political equality, "the establishment of the deathless law of justice in the great human family," and last, Plato, when he constructed his Republic.

The first attempt at an arbitral tribunal in Ancient Europe was the Amphyctyony of Delphi—a most unfortunate attempt. Set up to create harmony among the Hellenic peoples, it resulted in fact in the rupture between Sparta and Athens, and the exhausting Pelopenesian war. Moreover, it could not prevent the final catastrophe, the treason of the Locrians and the ensuing Sacred War which gave Hellas into the hands of the Macedonians. Nevertheless, these first judges of the Amphyctyony must be hailed as the forerunners of those who sit to-day at Geneva and The Hague.

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Greece fell. She was succeeded after the conquests of the Pax Romana and the coming of the Christian Era by the Empire of the Catholic Church. The Church, too, dreamed of Peace, under the guise of universal domination; the Papacy struggled against the Moslems as the Amphictyony had done against the barbarians. She made capital of 'the Kingdom of God'; but the bankruptcy of her clerics was not less spectacular than that of the priests of Delphi. They sold themselves to temporal powers, and they enslaved themselves to blind religious fanaticism. Then fell the night of the Dark Ages, when violence stalked through the length and breadth of the land. Yet, even then, in the depth of the human spirit, the dream of perpetual peace sought for expression.

In France, in particular, the embers of idealism still glowed, now and then a flame spurted up. . . .

Pierre Dubois, a legist of Philippe the Fair, envisaged a Europe united under the suzerainty of the King of France. Sully, the Minister and friend of Henry IV, desired equally to do away with the horrors of war, and to lighten the financial burden laid upon every European nation by the maintenance of permanent armies. He designed the main outlines of a European Federation, intended to prevent the outbreak of warfare and provide a peaceable solution of difficulties. It was to be directed by a senate of sixty-six members, delegated by the associated States, and this body was to have complete control of affairs. The senate had the command of an army and a navy composed of international contingents.

In the seventeenth century, the great Fénelon wrote: "As each citizen has a duty to his country, so each State has a

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much greater duty to the safety and peace of the Universal Republic, which enfolds each individual country." Montesquieu declared: "If I had some knowledge which was useful to my own country, but injurious to Europe and injurious to the human race, I should regard it as criminal knowledge."

In the eighteenth century, after the Treaty of Utrecht, the Abbé de St. Pierre, who considered the treaty as the basis of international law in Europe, developed a plan for perpetual pacification, and this plan was remarkably like that proposed by the negotiators of the Treaty of Versailles after the signature of that Treaty. Our peacemaking abbé concerned himself with perpetual guarantees to the States' signatories of his Federation, for the possession of the territories which their monarchs held at the conclusion of the pact. A *Status Quo*—even then! But the abbé gave this conservative assembly a military force composed of contingents from each nation.

This idea was taken up by J. J. Rousseau. He too planned a great armed League, "always on guard against those who might attempt to destroy or resist it." The Marquis de Mirabeau was more generous minded. In 1756 he had declared in *L'Ami des Hommes* that "men are brothers and that nations are immense families, which must no longer recognize the hateful distinction between nationals and aliens." The revolutionary Pleiad was at hand. Sébastien Mercier, Condorcet, Lazare Carnot, Rabaut de St. Etienne, St. Just, all imagined a world in which the lines of international law had been laid down by the republican proclamation of the Rights of Man and the Rights of the Citizen.

Finally, in the nineteenth century, the French Socialists

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raised militant and audacious voices. In 1814 Henri de Saint-Simon sketched out a reorganization of European Society and demanded from Britain and France, as the two leading progressive nations, the summons of a combined parliament. This was to be the germ of an organization which would extend over the Continent, and would control the affairs of the community. Following their leader, the Saint-Simonians aspired to create a congress to organize the European Confederation, and to set up an arbitral tribunal where, in solemn audience, before an international jury, and openly in the face of public opinion, nations would plead their great causes which had hitherto been buried in mysterious archives by secretive diplomatists.

Saint-Simonians, Fourierists such as Victor Considérant, isolated thinkers like Pierre Leroux and J.-P. Proudhon, all alike wished to see a great democratic assembly as judge of all cases arising between nations. Constantin Pecqueur, who was a Catholic, reverted to the mediæval tradition, and desired to revive "the Republic of God, the expression of the natural solidarity of all peoples, of all beings." As a stopgap he proposed international conferences, which should work out means of conciliation and association in full publicity. When the Powers were bound together in support of the Republic of God, their first duty would be to furnish detachments of men to form an international police force. "The Army of Peace . . . Being the sole legitimate force, it would prevent war even between nations outside the Pact, and would enforce judicial compromises by public might."

To this list of precursors we must add the band of philosophers, historians, and poets: Lamartine, Michelet, Renan,

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Littré, Anatole France—all looking beyond national frontiers to the illimitable future. In this group of prophets we must include Juan-Bautista Alberdi, an Argentine jurist who died in France. In 1870, in his book *Le Crime de la Guerre* he called for “the conversion of humanity to a Sovereign Court of International Justice.” M. de Madariaga (the great man of letters who at Geneva represented Spain, the only country whose constitution outlaws war) has written a study of Alberdi, and points out that Alberdi, speaking of reprisals, extols ‘economic and financial sanctions.’

And above them all towers Hugo with his lofty genius and his words of flame. Hugo was the mouthpiece of the basic virtues of France, and he remains the best embodiment of the forward rush of the human spirit, while yet he held to the beliefs of the nineteenth century. In 1872 the first Annual Peace Conference was held by the association founded by Frédéric Passy of noble memory, and at the opening Hugo proclaimed: “We shall have the United States of Europe which will crown the old world as the United States of America crown the New. The spirit of conquest will be transformed into the spirit of discovery; we shall have the home land without frontiers, trade without customs barriers, youth without barracks, courage without strife, life without violence, love without hate!”

How the master of visions here flings open the windows on to the immense future!

But this list of men of goodwill, honoured though they be in France, the home of the Encyclopædists, is incomplete.

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We must add Emmanuel Kant for Germany, and William Penn for America.

In 1795 the Königsberg philosopher published his Essay on Perpetual Peace. For five years he had felt the inward stirrings of the breath of revolution from Paris. Of all such anticipations Kant's essay is without doubt the most logical, and the most truly prophetic of the future. He was at once a moralist and a logician; he believed in the determinism which he saw running through history and through human evolution. Consequently after many changes and hesitations, he judged the establishment of a federation of nations based on voluntary consent and submission to the rule of law, to be decreed by Fate.

The immense advance in the art of war renders it more and more destructive, more and more essential to be avoided; hence the establishment of such a federation must the more certainly be decreed; so runs his argument. The lines that follow were written 140 years ago; (by how many illustrations has the art of war recently emphasized them!) "A war of extermination in which means of destruction which are equally fatal to both sides are used, can lead to no perpetual peace other than that of a vast graveyard for the whole human race. Therefore such a war and every factor which might produce it must be proscribed."

So Kant suggests not a European Federation, but a Federation of the World, which would reconcile international differences and compel nations to submit to legal obligations, and thus set up a state of peace by law.

Finally, we must go back a little to the birth of American political life. At the end of the seventeenth century an

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English Puritan, William Penn, left the London of the Stuarts and emigrated to the New World. There he founded the Quaker State of Pennsylvania and stamped it with his religion and his name.

In 1693 he published a project for a society of nations, "An Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe" through the creation of an assembly. This was to be a parliament of States, laying down laws for the conduct of sovereigns towards one another. Parliament also actually ensured that these rules were respected. As Sully, the Abbé de St. Pierre, Rousseau, Kant, and Constantin Pecqueur were to do later, Penn intended to place force at the disposal of Justice. "If any of the sovereignties that constitute those Imperial States shall refuse to submit their claim or pretensions to (the Parliament) . . . and seek their remedy by arms, or delay their compliance beyond the time prefixed in their resolutions, all the other sovereignties, united as one strength, shall compel the submission and performance of the sentence . . ."

There is no doubt that the example of this predecessor, the Protestant founder of Pennsylvania, inspired or at least confirmed the convictions of the President of the United States in 1918. He had been an onlooker, he became a combatant, and ended by assuming the supreme rôle of peacemaker.

What was then the position in the old world in 1918?

II—EUROPE IN 1918, AND THE CONFERENCE OF PARIS

Europe had been drained by fifty-one months of slaughter. Realizing Kant's prophecy, the most savage war of extermination the world has ever seen had piled up the dead in the vast

EUROPE IN 1918

graveyard of the human race. From August, 1914, to November, 1918, there was a greater death roll than there had ever been in past centuries in the wars of religion, in the selfish sacred causes of monarchy, or during the Revolution and the Empire, in the wars of national enthusiasm and the madness of conquest.

Faced by the heaps of dead and the appalling sight of those who came back—the wounded, the gassed, the disabled sufferers—by the enormous material ruin—the source of scandalous fortunes—every man's gorge rose against the horror of it. Or if not every man, at least those who had suffered deeply from some personal loss, or those who could rise above the massacre of fellow-citizens, and dream like the German philosopher in 1795, of perpetual peace.

This was the illusion. It had been shared in France on the deadly, thrilling day of mobilization, by so many (heroes or dupes) who never came back. Let us never forget the attestation of Charles Péguy, with its ironic ring: "I go, a soldier of the Republic, to fight for general disarmament and the war to end war."

Of course, we had not then as we have now, the statistics of the work of glory; out of 74 millions of men mobilized, 10 million killed, 10 million disabled, 19 million wounded and gassed. Besides this grand total of the killed, we must take into account the wreckage of private life: 7 million prisoners, 10 million refugees, 3 million missing, 5 million widows, 9 million orphans. Losses, too, of another sort: 10,000 milliard francs expended for the greater glory of General Staffs, and lost, the world over, to the cause of progress.

Thus, when the trumpets of the Germans sounded the

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parley in the cold November fog, when the guns of the Invalides answered saluting Peace—I can still hear the echo of that salvo—Paris in its expectancy and its reaction, shuddered with intense relief and dawning hope. France and the whole world breathed again.

Some sort of whole had to be made out of the ruins. This was the hard task that was to occupy the Conference of Paris for months to come. Unfortunately the mass of the people, who were good enough for cannon fodder or for plunder, had no voice in the debates. The stage was filled with diplomats, generals, ministers, premiers, who perorated and struck attitudes, while in the wings the masters of these masters, the gold ‘kings,’ the electoral ‘kings,’ and all the capitalists of Big Business, prompted the prompter.

On the one side there was the group of the conquered, on the other was that of the conquerors prepared to pursue their advantage to the extreme limit. Both alike were still breathing the atmosphere of war, made fouler by the lies piled up by both sides since 1914. Each side was the prisoner of its own prejudices, and the feeling between them was worse by far than at the day in 1914 when pre-war policy with its alliances and pseudo-equilibriums had unloosed disaster. So the governments, in spite of revolutions which had dethroned three emperors, met once more face to face, with old hatreds still alive and bitter resentments. Only Russia, or rather the U.S.S.R., was not there, for the convulsions of its birth were not yet over.

There was no reconciliation possible between the two camps. Each one shifted onto his neighbour the share of responsibility which was certainly his own. France had been

THE CONFERENCE OF PARIS

trampled under foot by invaders, and still dreaded the Pan-germanism which had armed so strongly for aggression before 1914. Germany and her Allies (Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Turkey) saw themselves not as subject to a just fate, but as the victims of a coalition of rivals scrambling for booty.

German Imperialism was defeated without confessing its defeat, and attributed all its misfortunes to encirclement by the Triple Entente. England was uneasy and jealous on account of naval rivalry and fears for the world market. France, full of thoughts of 'Revanche,' wished to regain Alsace-Lorraine. (President Poincaré openly gave this as his reason for wishing to live.) Russia's ambition clung to the old bait, the conquest of Constantinople and the Narrows.

It had needed the entry of America into the war after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, followed by the revolution in Berlin, to shift the balance to the side of the Allies.

But on the other hand Paris and London took their stand on their preconceptions and on their victory, and meant to visit on the Central Empires and on them only, the fault which was common to all the great pre-war Powers. They were determined not to face the interlocking causes of the catastrophe, nor to ask whether the Russian general mobilization, coming as it did before the Austrian and German mobilizations and made as it was with the encouragement of the French Government and General Staff, had not in actual fact caused the disaster. They laid all the blame upon the entry into Belgium by the armies of Wilhelm II.

Those in power at the moment argued against the law of war, which compelled Germany, caught between two fires in the East and the West, to try to crush France, which was

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already in arms, before Russia, which was much slower to move. To this, they opposed the unpardonable violation of Belgian neutrality, guaranteed by a treaty signed in 1839 by Great Britain, France, and Prussia herself.

This legal doctrine cannot be shaken as long as one holds life to be stagnation and not movement. Unfortunately history is there to teach that if all treaties are not voluntarily revised from time to time, then force will intervene and from time to time tear up these 'scraps of paper.' In the course of a century things change, and common sense can no more recognize the immutability of a contract than the perpetual validity of an oath.

Between 1839 and 1914, a space of nearly seventy-five years, the map of Europe had been completely altered. The Kingdom of Prussia had become the German Empire. Berlin believed that it had the right to reach Maubeuge and Lille by way of Brussels, because it was well aware that the French and English General Staffs had worked out together a whole plan of campaign on Belgian soil as early as 1906, and this had been confirmed in 1912.* These facts must be referred to (after all the historian must strive to be impartial). They were among the psychological factors which weighed upon the whole later course of Franco-German relations. But at the time no one paid the least attention to them.

To most of the plenipotentiaries, the question appeared

* From this time forward in all the preparations for the 'Revanche' for 1870, Poincaré, who had just succeeded Caillaux, foresaw that in the event of trouble between France and Germany, France might easily be brought into the position of *apparent* aggressor. He requested the English General Staff to guarantee the armed support of England even in this eventuality. Paul Cambon successfully negotiated this agreement, which defined and extended that of 1906 (*Documents authentiques français sur les origines de la guerre*, published by the Quai d'Orsay, vol. II, series III).

WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

thus: How can we juggle with all the famous Fourteen Points of President Wilson? These Points had been accepted by *all* the belligerents as the basis of the future conditions of peace.

III—THE FOURTEEN POINTS OF PRESIDENT WILSON, ACCEPTED AS THE BASIS OF PEACE BY ALL THE BELLIGERENTS

Let us run over these Points, which were wiped out almost at the moment of their formulation. Let us recollect, too, the circumstances in which they were imposed upon the signatories, who were bound in honour to respect them.

The President of the United States was the spiritual heir of William Penn, the Quaker. He had thrown his country into the war with the aim of securing victory for the good cause, of crushing Prussian militarism which seemed to him the only obstacle to the rule of international justice, and of establishing a final peace based upon the legitimate aspirations of the nations, and the righting of great wrongs committed in the past.

He had formulated the general conditions necessary for such a peace in his famous note of 8th January, 1918. Let us recall them:

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the sea, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

3. The removal, as far as possible, of all economic barriers, and the

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establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the Peace and associating themselves for its maintenance:

4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments shall be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the governments whose title is to be determined.

6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unembarrassed and unhampered opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need, and herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their goodwill, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

7. Belgium, the world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act, the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored.

8. And the wrong to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interests of all.

9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognized lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations

WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

11. Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the seas; and the relations of the several Balkan States to one another be determined by friendly counsel along lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economical independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan States should be entered into.

12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities should be assured an undoubted security of existence, and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development and the Dardanelles should be made permanently open as a free passage to the ships of all nations under international guarantees.

13. An independent Polish State should be erected which would include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence, and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants, for the purpose of affording guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.

Truly this is a noble ground plan for a better future! Its general outlines had been confirmed in two other declarations made in the course of the same year.

I. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS. 11th February, 1918

(1) Each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent.

(2) That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns

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in a game, even the great game now for ever discredited of the balance of power; but that

(3) every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims among rival States.

(4) That all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and consequently of the world.

2. SPEECH AT THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON AT MOUNT VERNON.

4th July, 1918

(1) The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at least its reduction to virtual impotence.

(2) The settlement of every question, whether of territory or sovereignty, of economic arrangement or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.

(3) The consent of all nations to be governed in their conduct towards each other by the same principles of honour and of respect for the common law of civilized society that govern the individual citizens of all modern States, and in their relations with one another to the end that all promises and covenants may be sacredly observed, no plots or conspiracies hatched, no selfish injuries wrought with impunity and a mutual trust established upon the handsome foundation of a mutual respect for right.

(4) The establishment of an organization of peace which shall make it certain that the combined power of free nations will check every invasion of right, and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit,

WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

and by which every international readjustment that cannot be amicably agreed upon by the peoples directly concerned shall be sanctioned.

3. SPEECH MADE ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE LIBERTY LOAN. 27th September, 1918

(1) The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favourites and knows no standards but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned.

(2) No special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all.

(3) There can be no leagues or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations.

(4) More specifically, there can be no special, selfish economic combinations within the League, and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion, except as the power of economic penalty, by exclusion from the markets of the world, may be vested in the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline and control.

(5) All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

We must quote as well the preamble of this speech, in which Wilson defines his deeper thoughts before he lays down the rules last quoted:

∴ Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule, except the right of force?

Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal

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affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force, or by their own will and choice? Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations, or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?

Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance or shall there be a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?

In putting these questions, Wilson brought together all the problems of peace. The great shepherd of his people had the answer in mind. It was to be the creation of the League of Nations foreshadowed in the 14th point of his declaration of 8th January, 1918—the living embodiment of his dream, the firm, solid foundations of the future. The great American democrat saw this future with the eye of his mystical faith, and saw that it was better, because it was more just.

IV—FROM THE SOUNDING OF THE ARMISTICE TO THE RIVETING OF THE TREATIES

It was on this international code to which both victors and vanquished had agreed for the second time that the League of Nations was to rest, and the League itself was to be the basis of the new spirit of equity.

I can still see the carriage driving from the station in the Avenue du Bois; in it sits a tall, old man, smiling, beside Poincaré. Crowds line the route and acclaim him. The impulse which at the time of the Armistice had filled every heart with hope now excited men to offer him their confidence, their admiration, their naïve gratitude. He had saved them in war time, he seemed to be the guarantor of a happy future, he seemed to be the predestined arbitrator of the Conference.

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This man, betrayed by his 'noble candour,' was only the plaything of the Conference. The conditions of the Armistice which Foch had dictated at the cross roads of Rethondes, had ruined any plan of conciliation in advance. The enemy was bound hand and foot at the mercy of the real conqueror, who was not the Yankee, but the Welshman and the man from La Vendée. The latter was a Chouan born too late, half 'blue,' half 'white.' The former was a truly English mixture of Whig and Tory—in other words a Liberal label on an article that was Conservative at bottom. They both laughed in their sleeve at the 'Professor of Law.' Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Wilson composed the Committee of Three, the sovereign power; and the two realists tilted much too vigorously against the champion of the ideal.

The right of nations to dispose of themselves freely and openly; the condemnation of secret diplomacy; the establishment of juristic relations between Governments which henceforward would be ruled in their mutual intercourse by a law common to all civilized societies; the suppression of *ententes* directed to the interests of one State or one group of States; equality between nations, mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity for nations small and great; economic equality so that all might freely compete in all the markets of the world—yes, very fine!

The Central Empires at their last gasp had accepted these principles, reckoning that they would be the basis of peace. They had only entered into the negotiations which led to the Armistice because they were certain of this. This is proved by the correspondence between the different German Chancellors and the American Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, and

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by the diplomatic notes exchanged at this time between President Wilson and the Allied Governments.

These Governments on 5th November, 1918, had declared that they were ready to treat with the German Government on the terms fixed by the Fourteen Points, as defined by the three later declarations. Thus there was a perfectly clear understanding, registered by the President of the United States, the German Government, and those of the Triple Entente, in which Italy had replaced Russia, which had dropped out since Brest-Litovsk.

The best proof that the Allies considered themselves as formally bound is that upon one of the points, the freedom of the seas, they had formulated a reservation which implied confirmation of all the others. Thus both sides were completely committed. Germany only consented to lay down arms because she was guaranteed a just peace. But the treaties conformed neither to the principles of President Wilson nor to the general expectations.

Certain clauses (the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to France, the reconstitution of Poland and Czechoslovakia) certainly put right injustices of old standing. But on the other hand, what wrongs were done! What violations of the pledged word were committed!

Let us count up the principal ones: Austria, the last fragment of the Holy Roman Empire, was prohibited from doing what she repeatedly and emphatically begged for, namely, reuniting herself with Germany. The Germans of Bohemia were given to the Czechoslovak State and the Austrians of the Tyrol to Italy. Poland received the Danzig Corridor, and also Galicia, with a population of Ruthenians, which should have

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gone to the Ukraine or Russia. The German port of Memel was given to Lithuania, and Transylvania, which was truly Hungarian, to Roumania. Jugoslavia (Serbia) received non-Serbian districts, Croatia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Montenegro, &c. All this was done without any consultation with the populations, other than the more or less engineered plebiscites in Schleswig, in Upper Silesia, and a few other small regions. Lastly, Egypt, which was subject to England, met with a stern refusal when she asked for an independent place beside the other Dominions in the new international concert.

After the Treaty of Versailles was debated in the French Chamber, the *rapporteur*, M. Barthou, recognized the facts: "The right of populations has not been respected, as the Peace Conference has not been so foolish as to push the doctrine of nationalities to its extreme limits."

It is difficult to omit the mention of the occupation of the Rhine districts which actually lasted until 1935; of the complete demilitarization of the same district; of the demilitarization of a zone on the right bank of the Rhine, 50 kilometres across; of the confiscation of the Saar region for the same length of time; of the confiscation of the German colonies under the pretext that they afforded strategic points of importance to Prussian militarism—and this at a time when all colonial claims were supposed to be reviewed in a large and impartial spirit. Here, too, mention must be made of the sinking of the rival fleet at Scapa Flow by the British; of the confession of guilt forcibly extorted from the Central Empires (Art. 231) so as to increase reparations beyond all bounds; of the unilateral disarmament of the conquered nations only, when the covenant which founded the League of Nations on

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5th November, 1919, ordered the reduction to a minimum of the armaments of all the belligerents.

There is only one conclusion possible: instead of reconstruction, the peacemakers got on with destruction. Lloyd George and Clemenceau had triumphed over Wilson's idealism. Bewildered, humiliated, defeated, the President of the United States had gone home, empty-handed and agonized. Nothing was left of the bases on which he had meant to build a new world. A most moving confession was wrung from him when the Irish came to plead in the name of their leader, M. de Valera, for admission to the League.

Wilson, who was looking pale and exhausted, fell back in his chair and owned he could do nothing. "I should have had to bring another army to Europe to fulfil all that I have promised!" As his visitors were leaving, he added, "I came here full of hope. I hoped to achieve so much. I have achieved nothing at all." The bitterness of this experience was finally to destroy his mind.

He arrived at Washington a dying man, and with him his ideal was buried for many years. From 28th June, 1919 (first signing of the Peace Treaty in the Gallerie des Glaces in which the German Empire had been proclaimed in 1871), to 18th August, 1920, the chain of the treaties was being riveted. The Treaty of Versailles dismembered Germany; the Treaty of St. Germain dismembered Austria; the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary; the Treaty of Neuilly, Bulgaria; and the Treaty of Sèvres, Turkey.

In my book *La Patrie Humaine*, I have shown in the rough the absurdity of the new map of Europe. I took each country in turn and showed in each case the harm done to a maltreated

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nation. I refer the reader to that sketch; it is gloomy, but unfortunately too true.

Clemenceau, Poincaré, and Millerand would gladly have revived in Germany the subdivisions existing before 1870. As they could not do this, they gagged her. The Russia of the violent Revolutionaries was sent to Coventry; robbed of the Baltic States, of Bessarabia and of Ruthenian Galicia; the armies of the emigrées were supported in their attack by France and Britain. Finally, the United States refused to ratify this mass of trickery and wilful harm, which amounted to a caricature of Wilson's vision.

How could anything proceed from this chaos of hatred and greed except an organization inspired by hatred and greed? How could anarchy engender order? How could any sound structure arise on rotten foundations?

It is true that the Treaty of Versailles opens with the Covenant of the League of Nations—at once a birth certificate and a deed of partnership—and the preliminaries are full of fine promises in appearance. The signatory Powers recognize—I will give the original—"obligations not to resort to war; prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations; the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments; and the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another."

In this way the child was born to whom fell a difficult duty and a dangerous though honourable task—the preservation of peace in a world where the war-spirit still lurked, ready

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to burst forth at any moment. The British Prime Minister of 1914, Lord Asquith, Earl of Oxford, dared to call the peace a 'dirty peace.' From the start, the weakly organism had to struggle against *Ananke*. All clear-sighted people foresaw this result. Mr. Robert Lansing, the American Secretary of State for Foreign Relations, speaking at Washington after the publication of the treaties, said: "War will follow from the treaties as surely as night follows day."

Can the new League become sufficiently far-seeing to avoid the dangers implied in this gloomy prophecy? This is the question dealt with in this book. The title indicates the answer which the evidence forces us to give, as far as recent history is concerned. But does this mean that even on the very edge of the abyss, there is no chance of a reaction all over the world, a revolution in the name of understanding? May not the whole world resume its senses, and force blind imperialism to bow to the universal will for peace?

Only by such means can a new living League of Nations be born, in which peoples and not Governments will speak. Then the dream of a thousand years will have accomplished its term, and be born into the world.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTITUTION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

I—THE ORIGINATING COVENANT

LET us first examine the inner construction of the Covenant, the constitution of the League of Nations and its twin bodies, the International Labour Office and the Supreme Court at The Hague. Let us first run through the principal parts of the organization, for many people talk about it and very few understand its true anatomy.

Any State which governs itself freely may become a member of the League (Art. 1). The League exercises its powers through an Assembly and a Council assisted by a permanent Secretariat (Art. 2). The Assembly (Art. 3) is composed of representatives of the members of the League—not more than three for any State—but as absolute equality between large States and small ones is a basic principle of the League, each State has only one vote, however many representatives it has. The Council (Art. 4) is the executive power (the Assembly being the legislative) and has sixteen members; of these six are permanent members appointed by their Governments, and ten are temporary members. These are in office for three years, though their term may be extended, and are elected by the Assembly.

The essential work of the League of Nations, which was

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designed to maintain relations between nations, is to decide disagreements in open session. Consequently, all members of the League agree (Art. 12) that "if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award of the arbitrators or the report by the Council." If, on the other hand, a member of the League resorts to war contrary to the engagements of Articles 12, 13, and 15, such member is considered *ipso facto* to have committed an act of war against all the other members of the League. These "hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade and financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a member of the League or not" (Art. 16).

Also, the League of Nations is a great association for mutual help. Article 11 lays down definitely that "any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effective to safeguard the peace of nations."

In sum, the League of Nations is founded upon this idea: just as a good constitution is nothing more than a method of assuring the well-being of the citizens to whom it applies, so the Covenant of the League of Nations is an international instrument, aiming at better conditions for all the peoples of

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the globe. Consequently the League aims at the achievement and maintenance of fair conditions of work for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and also in all other places whither economic relations may carry them.

It is this aspect of the League which is embodied in the International Labour Office. It is intended to improve the workers' position by the regulation of hours of work, limitation of the working days and the working week, the recruitment of labour, the struggle against unemployment, the raising of wages in accordance with a suitable standard of life, protection against industrial or general diseases, and industrial accidents, the protection of children, young persons, and women, the question of old-age pensions and health insurance. This is a heart stirring, magnificent, and delusive undertaking.

Like the League, the I.L.O. is composed of two bodies: the Bureau (Council) and the Conference (Assembly). The Bureau is directed by an administrative Council composed of twenty-four members. Of these twelve are nominated by the Governments; the other twelve are elected by the Conference, at which the delegates of the member States assemble annually. These twelve include six representatives of the workers and six of the employers. The Bureau nominates its Director as general secretary to the Conference.

The Bureau exists for research and preparation of material, and works out the agenda for the Conference. Consequently it follows social phenomena closely and brings together reliable and, if possible, complete evidence, on which international agreements on such questions may be based. These questions are laid before the Conference, which may adopt plans for

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agreements which are only codified after ratification by more than one State, or recommendations which are accepted by one or more of the member States, and take the force of law for these States.

As for the Permanent Court of International Justice: it is in origin a fragment of the former organization at The Hague, which was destroyed at the very moment after its Palace of Peace had been inaugurated. The Permanent Court was instituted by Article 14 of the Covenant, which laid down that the Court would have cognisance of all causes (of an international character) which parties brought to it, and also of those which were submitted by the Council or the Assembly of the League of Nations.

At first, eleven judges sat, but since 1931 there have been fifteen, elected by the League for a term of nine years. They are not professional lawyers, but diplomats. Technically The Hague Court is a judicial body and also a consultative council.

Sitting judicially, the Court applies international conventions and rules of law derived from custom and from the general principles recognized by civilized nations. It gives rulings also between opponents, and for this purpose is open to States who are not members of the League.

II—AN INCONGRUOUS ASSEMBLY

This vast construction, which is so impressive on paper, was the reparation made to the American idealist by the two unbelievers who had tricked him.

In the mind of the founder, the League of Nations (for

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collective insurance against war) was never to be a second Holy Alliance, nor was it to identify the victors' *status quo* with 'right' and 'humanity.' On the contrary, it was to keep the peace effectively by being in truth an association of free nations, dealing jointly with the affairs of the world, which thus became truly the Homeland of the Human Race. Consequently it should never have riveted the fetters on the vanquished, but it should have included all nations on a footing of complete equality.

But how distant was the dream from the reality! The victors, and they only, had weight and all authority. Although the vanquished had signed the initial Covenant, they were only admitted to the League after a lapse of time; Austria on the 15th December, 1920; Bulgaria on the 16th December; Hungary on the 15th December, 1922; Germany four years later (18th September, 1926); Turkey only recently (1932). As for Russia, Paris and London were still at war with her, and looked upon her from the first as a hostile power. Even in 1927 she was just tolerated on a preparatory commission for the Disarmament Conference that foundered. She was not received back into favour until 1934, when she was admitted as a set-off against the loss of Germany, after Hitler had banged the door in November, 1933.

No sooner was it on its feet, than the pseudo-League of Nations received the most violent shock. At the end of 1919, Congress in America refused to ratify the Covenant of Geneva—an appallingly paradoxical situation! The United States, whose President was both father and god-father of the child of Geneva, refused to recognize it! They stood aside; so that when the first session of the Council opened at the Ministry

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of Foreign Affairs in Paris on 16th January, 1920, the world was actually divided into three: the League, representing victors only; the little band of the conquered; and all the other nations, with the exception of the U.S.S.R. and the United States. Of these, the latter was the first economic and financial power in the world, and it distrusted a League which perpetuated the rivalries and quarrels of little Europe, with its war storms, and resolutely turned away. The former was revolutionary Russia with its twenty-two million square kilometres extending over two continents. It saw the amphictyony of Geneva as a production of bourgeois States, 'an Assembly of capitalist brigands.'

Geneva had been chosen as the international capital. There on 15th November, 1920, in a hotel adapted for the occasion, but probably predestined as its name implied (the International Hotel on the Quai du Mont Blanc), the new Council of sixteen members met. The Assembly was housed in the hall of the Electoral Building lent by the municipality for each one of its quarterly sessions.

Thirty-one founder States had signed the initial pact: Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, the British Empire, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, India, China, Cuba, Guatemala, Ecuador, Greece, France, Haiti, Hedjaz, Honduras, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Jugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, and Dalmatia), Siam, Czechoslovakia, Uruguay.

Thirteen others were to join later: Argentine, Chili, Columbia, Denmark, Spain, Norway, Netherlands, Paraguay, Persia, Salvador, Sweden, Switzerland, and Venezuela. Others came in still later: Austria, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Finland,

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Luxembourg, Albania (1920), Lettland, Lithuania and Esthonia (1921), Hungary (1922), the Republic of San Domingo (1923), Germany (1926), Turkey (1932), Irak, the U.S.S.R., and Afghanistan (1934). It must be noted on the other side that in 1927 Costa Rica, in 1928 Brazil, in 1933 Japan and Germany, and in 1935 Paraguay had left the League.

Thus at the present time fifty-five nations are members of the unwieldy and incongruous Assembly. In reality they are grouped either round Britain or round France. Counting her Dominions and her Protectorates (except Egypt which is subject and has no vote) Great Britain is supported by Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, India, the Hedjaz, and recently Irak. This is a respectable total of voters, without counting Britain's many faithful clients in Europe: Portugal, Denmark, and to a certain extent the other Scandinavian States, the Baltic States (Esthonia, Lettland, Lithuania, and Finland) which are bound to Britain by commercial interests, and, finally, Greece. In Asia we must include Afghanistan and Siam, and in South America most of the small Latin States.

France, too, has a group of friends and vassals, though they are somewhat less faithful than those of Britain; Belgium, which looks to London rather than to Paris, Poland (until the time when she will turn to Germany again), Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Roumania, all united since 1921 in the Little Entente.

Then there are those States who oscillate between these two groups according to their immediate interests or to internal changes; Spain, and especially Italy, who in spite of solemn promises lost part of her share of the booty, and has never

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forgotten it; two powerful countries of the Far East (Japan and China) and, finally, the large South American States (the Argentine and Brazil). The Anglo-Saxon group is the most powerful, and has by far the strongest gravitational pull.

In spite of the fiction whereby States declare themselves equal before the law—a very lofty theoretical concept, which unfortunately does not stand the strain of real life—what weight has the Republic of San Salvador, for instance, or of San Domingo, or even Guatemala, against the great Powers with their massive armaments? The history of the League has been short but stormy, and proves up to the hilt that the spirit of solidarity does not exist within it. And without this the League is only an illusion. Its members are unable to rise from the national to the international plane, and wobble to left or right from British Imperialism to French Conservatism.

The starting point of the cogs of the many complicated wheels of the League is the Secretary General. Until 1933, the office was held by Sir Eric Drummond, one of Lloyd George's familiars. The Assistant Secretary General was M. Avenol, a Frenchman.

III—THE MECHANISM AND FUNCTIONING OF THE LEAGUE

To exercise a real authority, political or even moral, the new amphictyony should have constituted an independent super-State, superior to all the member States. But this was quite out of the question. The composition of the Assembly and of the Council have proved it. All the delegates are appointed by Governments, remain entirely dependent on

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them, and can only engage their country as far as the orders sent from home allow.

Yet at its annual sessions, the Council exercises the widest possible functions. I quote the details from the *Larousse Mensuel*: "Article 4 of the Covenant gives the Council the right to take cognisance of all the questions within the League's sphere of action, or affecting the peace of the world."

Thus it is the Council which is concerned with any conflict which may arise between two member States (Art. 15 of the Covenant), or between two States when only one is a member, or even when neither party is a member. Also, when a member State has suffered an act of aggression, it is the Council which must secure executive measures designed to preserve its integrity. The Council, too, must prepare plans for disarmament and guarantee the protection of minorities.

Its further functions include: (1) control of the application of certain clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, such as the administration of the Saar (until 1935) and that of the Free Town of Danzig; (2) preservation of the independence of Austria and of Hungary.

The Assembly is a sort of parliament, which meets annually in September, but which can be summoned to an extraordinary session at the request of one or more members. Its special prerogatives include the fixing of the budget, voting of amendments of the Covenant, the election of temporary members of the Council and of the Court of Justice, and, above all, the examination of quarrels brought before it by the Council. Its resolutions become law.

These two important bodies are united by the General Secretariat which provides continuity in the daily life of the

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League. The Secretary is elected by the Council with the approval of the Assembly. Sir Eric Drummond looked on affairs with English eyes. He presided both over the internal regulation of the League, and over the five following special sections: the Committee for Minorities, the Committee for Mandates, the Committees for Social Questions, for Propaganda, and for Disarmament. He also supervised the meetings of the permanent committees which are the consultative organs of the Council. Each one of these committees studies some one particular question, and issues reports. They correspond roughly to the divisions of the Secretariat. There is a consultative committee for military, naval, and air matters; a permanent committee for mandates, a committee for propaganda, and also a committee for the welfare of children and young persons. Above all there is the committee for intellectual co-operation.

What a complicated sub-division into minute cells and what a hair-splitting division of labour! No wonder that such confusion together with the violence of the rival interests concerned have paralysed the goodwill of the League from the day of its birth. It should have been a Confederation of Peoples. By the blindness of the victors and the unhappy circumstances of the day, it has been reduced to a super-council of administration in the interests of the capitalist system.

IV—A DISARMED GENDARMERIE

The Peace Treaties did not hang together. Each article in them contained possibilities of explosion sufficient to blow Europe sky high. The League of Nations could hardly pre-

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serve a peace thus established, because she had no means of enforcing respect for it. As most of Wilson's predecessors had foreseen, the League needed an army, or, if you prefer it, a police force of her own.

This was so obvious that many plans were suggested for the creation of such a force. These plans were quite practicable in themselves. They were theoretically advisable as calling into being 'the secular arm.' The apostle of peace, Aristide Briand, and his friend Léon Bourgeois advocated them long before André Tardieu, Henri de Jouvenel and Paul-Boncour. But they all came to grief over the contradiction which underlies and ruins the whole of Wilson's system.

Wilson had thought of the supreme international power as though it were already established, as though all sovereign States were already prepared to bow to it. In other words, he took the problem as though it were already solved. He imagined every nation obeying the mystical power of a unique predominant entity. Just as the individual obeys the social code of his country, so each State should obey the laws of the collective system; in other words, before this state of things could be realized, the idea of sovereignty must have risen from the national plane up to the level of universality.

A great work this, but it is to be feared that to bring it forth from the womb of Time, a violent operation will be necessary, and rivers of men's blood be shed.

The idea of an international army implies such a unanimity of good will that, if it existed, there would be hardly any need for the army. Economic and financial sanctions, rigorously applied, would be quite enough, without any need for military sanctions. It is then quite clear why the League

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has not been able to act on any of the innumerable suggestions of this sort which have been made to it. Present circumstances forbade it. Will it always be so?

V—BAD OMENS

So the League suffered from the first from its inherent defects. It had to carry the threefold burden of the financial, military, and territorial clauses of the treaties. It advanced with slow uncertain steps under its unfavourable horoscope. The clauses referred to are so harsh, so unjust, and in some cases so impossible of execution, that when the question of their complete fulfilment came up angry feeling and the spirit of revolt grew among the conquered nations.

First, let us take the financial clauses. Germany and her Allies had been declared responsible for the Great War (Art. 231) and consequently for all the losses of the Allies arising from the invasion of Belgium. They now pledged themselves to make reparation for all loss to the civil populations of each of the Allied countries and their associates during the whole duration of the War (Art. 232.)

It is worth noting that though Germany always protested against the doctrine of one-sided responsibility laid down in Article 231, she never argued against the principle of an indemnity. One hundred milliards of marks had been proposed by Count Brockdorf-Rantzau, and refused by Clemenceau, Klotz, and Loucheur. On the subject of reparations, it was only the peculiar method used by the conquerors to fix the crushing total that caused the debate on them to last ten years—from the occupation of the Ruhr to the Con-

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ference of Lausanne. This matter was one of the menaces to the precarious existence of the peace.

France and Britain desired to extend the period of payment at will, so as to lay the burden of debt upon successive generations of the German people. This is a known fact. They refused the first offer made by Berlin, and decided that the sum of the damages should be fixed by an inter-Allied commission called the Reparations Commission (Art. 235). This Commission was not to report its conclusions to the German Government until 1921. It was in this way that Germany was crushed under a monstrous debt, unexampled in history.

I have already called the figures astronomical. So true is this that at the date of the signature of the Young Plan, which followed the Dawes Plan, after 14 milliard 507 thousand gold marks (about 102 milliards of French francs) had already been transferred to the Allies, there was still due according to the terms of The Hague Agreement 600 milliards of 'Poincaré' francs (capital and interest) to be paid within fifty-nine years. Here are the details: as reparations, thirty-seven annuities each of 1988 million gold marks, that is 73 milliard 556 millions, which at an exchange of about 6.25 works out at 460 milliards of paper francs. As Allied debt to America, 30 milliard gold marks in twenty-two annuities running from 1966 to 1988; in all 100 milliards of gold marks representing about 600 milliards of francs. Even the interested parties saw the dangers of such a bill, so that they reduced it to a 'capital sum' of 36 milliard 800 millions of rentenmarks (about 220 milliard francs at the present rate).

It was a real blood tax, laid on by men whose hatred blinded them. Delcassé himself, who was a notorious

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Germanophobe, declared in the Chamber at the ratification of the Treaty: "This is exactly as though you were forcing Germans to fight another war to free their sons from a servile clause whose origin they will not understand."

In the long run, common sense prevailed, and the usurers had to lower their terms. The Hoover Moratorium and then the 'Gentlemen's Agreement' of Lausanne succeeded in dispelling the nightmare of reparations. With it there vanished the lying catchword of 'the war that pays' and the belief that Germany would pay. She had actually paid only an inclusive amount of 67 milliards. Would it not have been better to accept the compensation of 100 milliards which Count Brockdorf-Rantzau had offered on behalf of the Republic of Weimar during the negotiations in Paris?

We must pass on to the military clauses. No one will contest the authority of the historian Guglielmo Ferrero, and he judged them with prophetic insight as early as the spring of 1919, in a passage printed by the *Secolo* in 1920: "I think the Peace Conference is making a mistake in trying to disarm Germany under present conditions by unilateral orders and a perpetual right of control of the German State. Territorial losses and war indemnities injure the body of a State; unilateral disarmament and control attack the principles of autonomy and independence, and wound the spirit of a State.

"Even without Alsace, chased back onto the right bank of the Rhine, Germany will always be a European State. If she be disarmed and controlled while most States of Europe retain unhampered control of their own forces, she is reduced to the rank of a protected State like Persia, or nearly so. I have never thought that Germany was beaten down to the

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point of resignation to this civil death without desperate resistance. The conquerors, trusting in their strength, have gone too far. They have believed it enough to write the word 'Disarmament' in a treaty and then expected Germany to come smiling and bowing low to surrender her sword on a velvet cushion, the sword which shook them for four years."

Another historian, M. Alcide Ebray, who was formerly a much esteemed diplomat, published a remarkable book, *La Paix Malpropre*, in 1925. In it he emphasized the immorality of the humiliating clauses: "When Germany and the Allies accepted President Wilson's Fourteenth Point among the preliminary conditions of peace, they admitted by implication that disarmament was to be general. The Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Neuilly and Trianon disarmed Germany and her Allies in effect on land and sea, but they did not restrict the armies of the *entente* countries in any way. Not only was this a new flagrant violation of promises made, but the most serious of them all. For what imaginable act could be more serious and more unjust than to leave any country whatsoever unarmed amongst a world of armed enemies?"

It is true that, whether hypocritically or by a belated feeling of remorse, the Treaty of Versailles laid down (Part V, Art. 159-213) that the disarmament of Germany and her Allies was only a beginning and that the other powers would follow suit. The Memorandum addressed to Germany made this definite: "The Allied and Associated Powers wish to make it clear that their requirements in regard to German armaments were not made solely with the object of rendering it impossible for Germany to resume her policy of military

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aggression. They are also the first steps towards that general reduction and limitation of armaments which they seek to bring about as one of the most fruitful preventives of war, and which it will be one of the first duties of the League of Nations to promote.

The work of preparation was stated to last seven years, and all the world knows what was the denouement of that Conference of dreary memory, after two years of palavering. Very evidently the only object was to elude the fulfilment of the promises made.

Until the creation of the 'Schutzpolizei,' which was much the same as the French 'Garde Mobile,' the German effectives were subject to the limitation of numbers set forth in Article 160, paragraph 1: "The total number of effectives in the army of the States constituting Germany must not exceed one hundred thousand men, including officers and establishments of depots. The army shall be devoted exclusively to the maintenance of order within the territory and to the control of the frontiers." This meant that there was to be no army properly so called, neither for attack nor for defence. It put Germany into a position incompatible with the dignity of a great nation, and reduced her to a sort of enslavement, and to the humiliating position of a second-rate power. It goes without saying that from the moment she saw that French policy aimed only at preserving this *status quo* for ever, she used every means in her power to break her fetters.

Lastly, there are the territorial clauses. I am not going to examine the geographical puzzle which the new map of Europe presented after the partitions; nor shall I enlarge upon

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the dangers to the peace of Europe and of the world—dangers which arise from the discontent of mutilated nations and from the resulting economic unrest. During the next few years many incidents proved the absurdity of the new frontiers. I shall merely mention the most striking. First, there was the Anglo-French split. By the Treaty of San Remo in 1920, Britain had agreed to the French occupation of Damascus. In return France recognized Britain's mandate for the oilfields of Mosul. But the British authorities did not wish to see French troops at Damascus, as they had already promised the town to the Emir Feisul.

With the support of the Druses, the Emir decided to fight France. "There is no reason to think that the repeating-rifles used by the Emir and his Allies were provided by English armament firms." I quote this statement from the English historian and M.P., A. Fenner Brockway. Here the international arms industry reappears, doing the devil's work again. Throughout the war it had made sales to all belligerents indiscriminately. I shall repeatedly return to this industry and its sovereign influence in the course of this book.

A second example will illustrate the further activity of the arms industry, as well as the curious currents which underlie agreements. The Treaty of Sèvres (perhaps the harshest of all) had partitioned Turkey, taking from her regions which were notoriously Turkish, such as the west of Asia Minor, which went to Greece. The British Government was semi-officially in favour of Greece, the French Government in favour of Turkey. The Vickers firm of London had faith in the credit of Athens and sold arms and munitions to Greece. The

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Greek army drove the troops of Mustapha Kemal back into the heart of Anatolia.

The Ghazi had been entrusted by the Assembly of Angora with the task of recovering the lost territory. He called an army out of the ground, so to speak. He made an arrangement with France whereby he obtained a supply of artillery and French rifles. Then he crushed the Greeks in the bloody battles of Sakaria in 1922, reconquered Cilicia, and pushed the invaders back to the sea. An American war correspondent described the operations thus: "First, I was a witness of the Greek retreat. The soldiers abandoned cannon and machine guns, all stamped with the mark of the English firm of Vickers. Then I was present at the triumphal entry of the Turks into Smyrna. They brought with them magnificent Creusot guns. On that day I grasped the real significance of the *Entente Cordiale*."

The Powers had to accept the Turkish victory. In 1923 the Treaty of Sèvres, having become simply a 'scrap of paper,' was officially revised. Turkey kept the whole of Asia Minor, and thus extinguished the Greek ambitions which had even created counter-actions between the Allies themselves.

The height of irony lies in the fact that the Treaty of Lausanne, the bastard of the Treaty of Sèvres, was concluded outside the system of the League, to which neither Greece nor Turkey thought of appealing. Armed force alone had played out the game. It was a striking proof that even after the advent of Geneva the era of juristic relations between nations had not yet opened.

PART II

THE GROWTH OF THE INFANT LEAGUE

“Nation—a pompous way of saying barbarian.”

—LAMARTINE.

CHAPTER I

THROUGH THE IMBROGLIO OF POLICIES

THE existence of a League of Nations could have and should have transformed the political code of Europe, ended the poor-spirited rivalries between nations, and replaced them by a harmonious system of co-operation and agreement. But the necessary condition would have been that each of the nations that met at Geneva should have wholeheartedly given up its bias and prejudices and helped to bring in the new order of things with good will.

In reality the various Governments continued to behave just as they had done before 1914, letting go none of their ambitions, grievances, and hatreds. They remained obstinately faithful to the traditional diplomacy of the basest interests just as though in the war they had learned nothing and forgotten nothing.

Before outlining the life of the League of Nations in the last fifteen years, we must have a general idea of the almost inexplicable entanglements of national policies. They resembled a knot of vipers. Without this survey we shall not appreciate the vicissitudes of the League.

For the sake of clarity, it is convenient first to take Britain, then France, Germany, and their dependants; lastly, the U.S.S.R., Japan, and the United States, for those being distant from the European storm centre logically fall into a group by themselves. A sketch of each State will enable us to see the general position.

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I—GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain looked out over Europe and saw nothing but division. But she remained faithful to her principle of the Balance of Power. She was always fearful that some other Power might become supreme on the Continent, and so, just as in the nineteenth century, she continued her everlasting see-saw, balancing some of the Great European Powers against the others. Just as in 1815, she had tried to limit her victorious allies, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, so in 1919 she tried to bridle French ambition by opposing all aggrandizement on the Rhine and in the Saar. One must praise her in so far as she even passively stood out against the policy which first occupied Frankfurt, and then the Ruhr. Later, she again opposed her views to those of France in the Mediterranean and in Asia Minor actively, if not visibly.

When in 1924 Ramsay MacDonald and Edouard Herriot came to power, there certainly did seem to be a *rapprochement* between London and Paris. This was because Britain feared that the left wing would make overtures to Berlin. Although some Frenchmen called her then pro-German, she has in truth never been moved except by her own interests.

She only advocated the restoration of Germany because she believed it to be a necessary condition of the revival of good trade. It was for this reason also that Lloyd George was the first statesman of Western Europe to resume relations with the Soviet. Great Britain regarded Russia as a huge market.

British thought is profoundly realistic; she showed this again later when she opened multiple official or semi-official conversations with the Hitler Reich, in spite of her vigorous

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abuse of Hitler's dictatorship and anti-Semitism. This same abuse did not prevent Britain in 1935 from accepting his restoration of the army and the navy. This is an example of the recognition of the *fait accompli*, to which London is always inclined when her vital interests are not involved. At the present moment Britain begins to be uneasy about Germany's rearmament, and once more her policy is veering round in accordance with changing circumstances.

French sentimental politicians are often astonished at this merciless common sense. Misunderstandings arising out of this have done nothing to clear the air at Geneva. At the outset, and for long after, another tendency of British policy prevailed. This was the application of the famous 'Divide and rule': never to become involved in any European complication at the expense of questions which are more important for Britain. Whether her Government be Labour, Liberal, or Conservative, Britain is first and foremost an Empire, 'the Commonwealth'! Whether MacDonald or Baldwin is in power (and to-day the two are one) the Foreign Office pursues its own objects without deviation. Britain may say that her frontiers were now on the Rhine, but in reality she is less interested in the Rhine than in the Eastern Mediterranean, in Egypt, in Singapore, in China, and the Pacific. The defence of the Channel and North Sea coasts involves the defence of the Capital, and is important, but the defence of India and the Dominions is still more so.

What are the leading interests of the Commonwealth? First, the need to secure the supply of foodstuffs and raw materials. Great Britain's very existence depends on this. Her people, an industrial population, settled in a smallish country

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whose population exceeds forty-two million, or 170 persons to the square mile, would be condemned to death within a few weeks if her communications were cut.

Secondly, the economic conditions of the Commonwealth demand that she reduce her expenditure on land armaments. Britain will certainly always remain a formidable naval Power. Though she may lose the crushing naval superiority which she had in the nineteenth century and down to the Great War, she will at least remain on parity with the navy which has become the most important in the world—the American navy. Until the present time, budgetary considerations have prevented her from re-entering the mad pre-war armament race. For this reason she accepted the Naval Agreement with Germany in 1935, and has varied in her attitude towards the League of Nations in conformity with her varying policy.

In 1919 she refused Clemenceau's request for a guarantee of French security; in 1924 she rejected the protocol put forward by Herriot, and in 1932 M. Tardieu's plan; because all these would involve her in conditional engagements which would embarrass her if at the time when they fell due, she had also to defend her distant possessions.

She only accepted the Locarno Pact because it guaranteed the Rhenish Frontier, in the protection of which she is interested. She had no interest in the security of France's satellites. In the same way, in 1932, she avoided taking any international action in China, not wishing to quarrel with Japan. But in 1935 at Geneva she set the machinery of sanctions in motion against Italy, because Italian action in Abyssinia touched her imperial interests. She has control of

GREAT BRITAIN

so many votes, and has such a large clientele of large and small States who are more or less her vassals, that she has made the League a mere tool of the British Empire. She was only fired with enthusiasm for the principle of collective security when Hitler became a portent of danger to 'her' Europe. Edward VIII has succeeded George V, but apparent changes only veil the real continuity of outlook. The Admiralty and the Intelligence Branch ensure the future for the Crown.

Yet it would be unjust to see nothing but self-interest in the recent movement of Labour in favour of League action against Mussolini's aggression. It must be true that these multitudes of men were moved to support the Covenant, whose virtues have never yet been proved, by a new sense of international solidarity and a generous outlook both on the present and the future. It may be that they are always conscious of the inevitable superiority of the United Kingdom and its world-wide Empire, but yet they have an ingrained taste for fair play, and an almost mystical faith in order. Amongst all nations, we must think, such feelings are growing up.

Thus in British affairs to-day two currents are running. After the Italo-Ethiopian adventure, will Britain return to her traditional and recent splendid isolation? Or do the British really feel that there is no possible future organization of international affairs except a *genuine* system of collective security?

II—FRANCE

France had been through a grim trial of four years' duration, and had supported it stoutly. After it ended, she fell a

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prey to nerves and apprehensions, which prevented her from using her genius for revolution in the organization of peace. Her two bogies were the possible restoration of Germany and the loss of the fruits of victory. Even in the time of Briand, the Government majority were never convinced that a reconciliation could be sincere. It was as though the clauses of the Treaty were not strong enough, and as though it were to be used to keep the enemy in subordination, not to say servitude, for as long as possible. Here we must look back a little. We must recall first the refusal of an indemnity instead of reparations, so as to leave the payments in suspense, like the sword of Damocles. Then we must remember the adventure on the Rhine, not forgetting that at the Conference of Paris our negotiators claimed the whole of the right bank of the Rhine, in the tradition of Richelieu, the kings of France and the two Napoleons.

President Wilson reacted strongly, and the two Anglo-Saxon Powers vetoed the proposal. Clemenceau and Poincaré had to content themselves with the demilitarization of the Rhine Province, and its occupation for fifteen years. They hoped at least to annex the Saar as a compensation, but here, too, they had to accept a temporary compromise.

They were however confirmed imperialists, and they attempted another line for the seizure of the Rhineland. If the Rhenish population by a free vote demanded reunion with France, would not the principles of Wilson come into play? Autonomy would work out as annexation in disguise, and Germany would lose her western provinces just the same. This attempt at separation came to a lamentable end as all the world knows. Its most obvious results were the death of

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hundreds of victims in fierce skirmishes, and the stimulus to German hatred of the fomentors of separation.

Let us examine shortly the post-war tendencies which set the spirit of international reconciliation and that of hatred of the 'hereditary enemy' against one another in France. Each of these opposing policies was embodied in a man: the one in Aristide Briand and the other in Raymond Poincaré. Poincaré was of middle-class stock from Lorraine, dry and unemotional, a Jingoist rather than a patriot; throughout his life he pleaded no cause but his own, which became unfortunately identified with the cause of France. Briand was of humble birth and belonged to the Left Wing. He was a true Breton, both mystical and subtle in mind. The war with all its horrors had converted him to the cause of peace. It was the misfortune of our country that the Lorrainer carried the day.

In 1921 Briand was President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs. He believed sincerely in reconciliation between France and Germany, and in European co-operation. When he returned from the Washington Conference, he was determined to outline a constructive plan. He had said that the nervous state of mind of all nations could only be cured by a general effort towards solidarity. With this in mind, he went to the Cannes Conference. Lloyd George was carried away by his large views. He even declared that if France were attacked by Germany on the Rhine he would give her the armed support of Britain.

But in Paris all the fair promises for the future given by these declarations were disregarded. The conspirators at the Elysée were Millerand, the traitor, and, behind him, Poincaré

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and Barthou, both longing to return to power. They disavowed Briand, and he resigned.

This coup put off the realization of Briand's dream to the Greek calends. It also wrecked the Conference of Genoa, to which Lloyd George had invited the European Powers, including Germany and Russia, before it met. Barthou was the mouthpiece of Poincaré's policy (war on Berlin) and of Millerand's policy (war on Moscow), and he showed Europe that France had turned awkward. Germany and Russia signed a treaty of alliance with commercial clauses, and, as people said, secret military clauses. Lloyd George answered by proposing a pact between *all* European States. This proposal came too late. It was good-bye to the reorganization of the Old World. All that was left on the stocks was the Reparations Commission, which was charged with the fixation and the recovery of the German debt.

Early in 1923, after Poincaré had been recalled to power by Millerand, came the ridiculous expedition to the Ruhr. This time the object was to cripple the economic life of Germany, by depriving her of her richest region of coal and ore. Poincaré, the hard Lorrainer, chose for the expedition the very moment after the London Conference, at which the Chancellor Cuno had asked for a moratorium and an international loan, and he himself had demanded priority for reparation payments for the devastated areas, for the establishment of financial control of the Reich, and for the seizure of economic values as pledges.

The British Premier, Bonar Law, went to Paris to propose a reasonable offer (3½ million gold marks at the end of four years) and the linking of the German debt settlement with that

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of inter-Allied debt, including European debts to America. But in vain. These sensible suggestions were not even examined, for the occupation had been decided upon in principle. The first pretext was grabbed at; it consisted of the failure to deliver some telegraph poles.

In spite of the protests of Britain, French and Belgian troops entered the Ruhr. The results are well known: passive resistance, sabotage, bloodshed by the invading forces, the refusal of the settlement offered by the Reich on 2nd May (30 milliard gold marks before 1931), finally, on August, 1923, the replacement of Cuno by Stresemann, who reopened negotiations.

This was a hollow victory indeed, since it bore no good results at any time, and cost an exorbitant price. The Ruhr was the real grave of hope between France and Germany. Profound economic, financial, and social unrest began beyond the Rhine, and led to the complete crash of German finance. Speculation of the most disgraceful sort flourished, and the middle and working classes were ruined, while agitators and the scum of society profited thereby.

The reaction gave birth to the National Socialist movement, under Hitler, who is Poincaré's bastard son. And the new doctrines were coloured by hatred of France, which was held responsible for the dreadful suffering in Germany.

And this hatred was justifiable. Poincaré would have pushed his advantage still further, had it not been that he banked on separatism in Westphalia as well as on the Rhine, as his own apologists admit. After the elections of 1924, his 'National Bloc' Government was succeeded by a Ministry under Herriot. Millerand, out of office, meditated a *coup*

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d'état. To him succeeded Doumergue, who acted the part of a radical, but was nothing but an opportunist.

After that, French policy took a new turn, and French ministers turned again to Geneva. Herriot became President of the Chamber, and Painlevé succeeded him. The Quai d'Orsay suddenly remembered the existence of the League of Nations and saw its possibilities as a tool. The next chapter will deal with its first steps, with the unsuccessful adventure of the Protocol and the subsequent success at Locarno. The horizon cleared, only to cloud over again too quickly.

Within two years, the policy of Poincaré had undermined the Left Wing. Herriot, who was sincerely a democrat, had unfortunately assisted in this, when he vacated the presidential chair to defeat the Briand-Caillaux Ministry which claimed plenary powers. The Cabinet which he formed was immediately upset, and, directly after, he agreed to enter Poincaré's new ministry, and gave it a free hand. Herriot wanted peace and thought it would be dangerous to give Germany equality of rights.

This was the idea which dominated every French ministry in their financial and military policies, except the ministry of Briand. In 1929, when the ex-President of the Republic, being mortally ill, gave up the office of President of the Council, his successors were not sorry to see his health give way under the attacks of the press, whose pens were tipped with gun-metal. And yet he was the greatest Foreign Minister whom France has had since the War. When Briand had gone, his successors whether of the Right, Centre or of the Left, all licked the boots of the Lorrainer, and his shadow still lies across our foreign policy.

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There is to be no trust in Germany! This was the word even in the days of the Weimar Republic, which would have consented to friendly agreements. Naturally, Hitler's advent reinforced this point of view. His savage treatment of the Jews, his new 'Kulturkampf' against the Catholics, and his persecution of the Communists excited the rage of these three groups all over the world, but the foremost idea in the minds of the French authorities was their own discomfiture and their justifiable fear (why not call it what it was?) of the formidable German rearmament. Hitler had succeeded Hindenburg as the unquestioned master of the Third Reich, and carried through this project.

Such was the situation that emerged from fifteen years of political blindness. There were only two ways out: either a belated reconciliation on terms much less favourable than might have been obtained by Briand and Stresemann, or else another war. Although this war might have been engendered within the juridical system of the League, that would not have made it less abominable or less disastrous in the end for everyone.

III—POLAND, THE LITTLE ENTENTE AND BELGIUM

Before our sketch of German policy, we must first glance at that of France's satellites.

As soon as the treaties were signed, as though it was not enough to have disarmed and degraded Germany, one idea filled the heads of Poincaré and his ministers: that of the strengthening of the yoke by a far-seeing system of alliances, thus returning to the worst tradition of history. How much immediate financial

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aid did France give, and how many contingent military obligations did she contract as her sympathies, or let us say frankly, her interests veered round?

Poland was saved from the Soviet invasion by General Weygand, and consequently became at first a client and satellite of France. On 19th February, 1921, a political agreement was signed at Warsaw by which Poland and France pledged themselves to act in concert in all questions of foreign policy involving international relations, and also, in the event of an unprovoked attack; in all manner of defence of land and interests.

Briand (Briand and Sapieha countersigned this treaty) was as yet only known as the man of the occupation of Frankfurt and 'the man of violence.' The Quai d'Orsay cultivated this friendship at great cost, uncertain though its value was. One of the French ministers went so far as to say that the French frontier was on the Vistula! It was, however, foolish to rely upon the masters of Warsaw, Colonel Beck, and the old Germanophile, Marshal Pilsudski. Poland was between the upper and nether millstones of Berlin and Moscow, and under Pilsudski there was a growth of Polish Fascism after the advent of Hitler. She was sympathetic to the German dictator. Little by little the bond between France and Poland weakened. After 1934 this country, which France had helped to restore, must be reckoned as a satellite of Germany. Hatred of Russia is the strongest motive of her statesmen and Warsaw has chosen what seems to her the least evil, in spite of the profound split over the Danzig Corridor. Her best friends must hope that she may not fall a victim one day to her double dealing.

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As to Roumania, Jugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, they were bound to France by successive treaties of alliance in military and financial respects, even to the point of limiting her freedom of action to a dangerous extent. Since 1921 they have been associated. They thought insufficient the guarantees for the *status quo* offered by the Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant of the League, and this though their statesmen, particularly Benes and Titulesco, are the most influential speakers and the most convinced partisans of the League. They were afraid that their rule over their populations of alien race (Hungarians in Transylvania and in Jugoslavia, Germans or Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia) was very insecure. For these reasons the three States concluded the Pact of the Little Entente.

It was the first post-War instance of the collective political alliances whose lack of balance had proved so dangerous in 1914. It was a fortuitous arrangement and showed at an early date how little the associates of Geneva believed in the value of the contract which they had signed.

No doubt the Quai d'Orsay supported this alliance of the Eastern States of Central Europe in the belief that it would help to contain the German or semi-German States, and thus to secure France. But has France not tied her own hands twice over, in return for this security, which may be sham? First, she cannot now give ear to the slightest demand for revision from Austria or Hungary. This shuts the door on any genuine understanding with those two nations, who are forced into the other camp. Secondly, to please these three States, who have succeeded the Hapsburgs, she must veto the restoration of the monarchy. And perhaps that would be the

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most reasonable solution of the Austro-Hungarian problem, having regard to the growing influence of Hitler-Fascism in the two countries.

The Little Entente is also gorged with French money and French arms. Nevertheless, in case of need the Little Entente is quite ready to forget the generous giver, and turn to other powerful protectors, who have a better place in the sun.

The case of Belgium is quite different. In 1914 she played the Franco-British trump card, and although she knows what her hostility to Germany has cost her, she has remained France's faithful friend and no doubt her faithful ally. Nevertheless, her eyes are turned on London even more often than upon Paris. One cannot doubt Belgian love for France, but what is one to think of English sentiments towards her?

IV—GERMANY

Ever since what the Germans called the Diktat (dictation) of Versailles, Germany's whole aim has always been and always will be to elude it by arming or to destroy it. Can one blame her? She lost one-eighth of her territory, she was crushed by reparations, deprived of army, navy, and colonies, branded with infamy by the recognition (extorted and therefore void) of her unilateral responsibility for the War; she has 60 million people; she is a nation as great and powerful as France; she could not accept conditions which even Lloyd George called 'terrible.' It was called 'a Carthaginian peace.'

As a matter of fact, every Chancellor and every President of the Reich has protested publicly on every possible occasion.

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The Wilhelmstrasse has given up the claim to the lost provinces of Alsace-Lorraine, officially at least. But neither the Polish Corridor, nor Danzig, nor the Saar (which has since been regained) had disappeared from German maps.

One must conclude that in spite of the abrogation of the financial and military clauses in response to her tenacious efforts, Berlin will never be satisfied until the Fatherland has regained all the regions of which it was deprived. Indeed, this is the openly declared object of German policy. No one will criticize this trend except those very people who felt exactly the same spirit of vengeance after 1871 and the Treaty of Frankfurt. They are curiously lacking in self-knowledge. There was, however, a time when the duel between France and Germany seemed likely to turn into a duet. Just at the time (it was immediately after the Ruhr episode) when Briand was conceiving his peace policy in France, a statesman of equal honesty, a one-time national imperialist, Gustav Stresemann, had come to the conclusion that it was possible to get the treaty modified in a reasonable way, if all the cards were put on the table. He has been accused of 'finessing.' But in diplomacy is it not the rule, if you are to do your best for your country?

Stresemann's idea was to observe the Diktat loyally, then to obtain concessions, and so prepare for the reconciliation of the two nations, which would have meant a true European balance. Thus we shall see him at Locarno, at Thoiry, and at the signing of the Briand-Kellog Pact, always faithfully working at his difficult task.

Just as Briand was violently attacked by our own Nationalists, so Stresemann in his country incurred the utmost

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fury of his former party. His compatriots would not have been sorry had he met with the same fate as Rathenau and Erzberger, who were both assassinated because they also had tried to sketch out plans for a Franco-German *rapprochement*. In the end, ill and worn out with his troubles, he died.

Stresemann died in 1929, two years before Briand was ousted from the political scene. With him disappeared the only man able to control the wave of nationalism which was swollen by discontent. He might also have prevailed against those who wished to destroy the Treaty of Versailles, root and branch. After his death all these aspirations found their expression in Hitler's organization, which was financed from this time on by the great international firms. This fact can never be sufficiently emphasized. Hitler's programme was: the recovery of the Saar, of Danzig and the Polish Corridor, the abrogation of the 'unilateral guilt' clause, and above all the power to rearm freely. This was a way of obtaining the famous Gleichberechtigung (equality of rights) by conquest.

What did the future leader really promise to his disciples? That he would give back to Germany her dignity as a great nation, which had been trodden underfoot by the victors; that she would resume her place in the sun morally and materially. Then after the elections of 1930 the Austrian-born ex-house-painter, bred in a purely German tradition, the founder of National Socialism, became the head of a great party with more than a hundred votes in the Reichstag.

It was a minority, but a strong one, and it compelled the ministers of the Reich, Brüning, von Papen, von Schleicher, to adopt a policy of growing resistance to the terms of the Treaty. On this point the National Socialists were supported

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by the Social Democrats and by the Communists, and the minority soon became a majority.

Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, and President of the Reich in 1934, and then in spite of the nominally republican constitution, Germany stood out clearly as a totalitarian State with ambitions no less dangerous to the peace of Europe than the militarism of the Hohenzollerns had been.

France had held the Republic of Weimar at arm's length, although she could have and should have negotiated normally and humanely. It is French hostility and lack of understanding which created the Third Reich. Once again there is an Empire based on Pan-german racial feeling.

V—AUSTRIA, HUNGARY AND BULGARIA

The war severed the political connexion of Germany and Austria-Hungary. But the influence of Berlin has survived in the part of Central Europe which is 'Balkanized.' Here the two chief fragments are Austria and Hungary, diminished to their present size by the treaties.

Apart from the areas given to Poland and Italy, the former Hapsburg Empire or Double Monarchy was divided into five States, which form two groups: the one Vienna and Budapest, the other Prague, Belgrade, and Bucharest, the three latter being the States which were clever enough to take the winning side. Austria and Hungary were weaker than Germany and they did not share the protection of Britain, so that they provided the greater part of the spoil.

Austria emerged from the treaties like a hydrocephalous monstrosity. She is now a State of six million inhabitants,

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with a capital city containing two millions; she is a mountainous country, poor in agricultural land and overfull of industrial concerns.

She has made courageous attempts to live, but most unfortunately on each occasion, when her situation seemed hopeless (and this was often the case), she could see no way out except by a union with the German Reich. First, the Socialists who formed the earlier Governments, and then the National Socialists have owned the necessity of the Anschluss, and have tried to bring it into being in its most useful form, that of economic union. Political union would only be the outcome of this kind of connexion.

The Powers have vetoed this. Yet it must be admitted that the existence of such a State, deprived as Austria is now, of all its former industrial outlets, is purely artificial. Had the union of the two German-speaking countries been the aim in view, this would have been the very way to accomplish it. This fact, too, must be noted; since the ruin of the working classes, after the bloody riots in Vienna, and still more so after the assassination of Chancellor Dolfuss, who was the humble servant of the Powers supporting Austrian independence, the Fascist coalition of the Heimwehr and the Nazis is drawing Vienna more into the wake of Berlin. This coalition is not openly admitted, but it certainly exists.

Hungary presents a paradox; its problems are different from those of Austria, but they are not less pressing. Hungary lost two-thirds of her territory and is now reduced to the Hungarian Plain, the Puszta, beloved by Hungarian poets. She is now practically an agricultural country, as she has lost almost all her industrial resources. Her mountain regions

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with their rich mines have been divided between her neighbours, Jugoslavia, Roumania, and Czechoslovakia.

Austria is starving because she cannot buy foodstuffs which she needs. Hungary, on the other hand, cannot get rid of them, as customs barriers prevent their export. Budapest has never accepted the rôle foisted upon her. '*Nem, Nem, Soha*' ('No, No, Never') is her motto.

Hardly was the Treaty of Trianon signed than the whole Hungarian people cried out for revision. Hungary only entered the League of Nations to give more weight to its claims, and its representatives at Geneva, Count Apponyi and Count Bethlen, have never ceased to draw attention to the injustice done and the possible disastrous results for Europe of Hungary's newly made position.

In the hope of gaining a revision at least, she has turned to the Powers who might help her, one after the other. First she tried Italy, which like herself was Fascist. Cultural relations were cultivated and many visits were exchanged. Mussolini seemed willing to put himself at the head of a Revisionist Group—Hungary, Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria. Then Budapest turned toward Berlin, and of late years there have been signs of a new Germano-Austro-Hungarian Alliance. It would be an attempt at a reconstruction of the Triple Alliance.

No one will be astonished at this who understands how Austria and Hungary in their isolation felt especially strongly attracted to Germany because their historic traditions drew them that way. They also had aspirations in common with her and they felt that an economic unit could be formed out of Germany and the remains of the Dual Monarchy.

Some people have thought that the best way to prevent

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this would be the reunion of Austria and Hungary, which are economically complementary, under a representative of the former dynasty.

As far as France is concerned, there would be no danger in the restoration of a State which would not be an aggressive power like the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but an element of stability in Central Europe. Britain is not opposed to such a restoration in principle. But each time the question has come up, London and Paris have given way in face of the opposition and threats of the Little Entente.

These facts are a striking proof of the absurdity of the partition. Instead of simplifying, it has set up complications. The Dual Monarchy was destroyed for the benefit of the small Powers which inherited from it. But this act has created a danger spot in the very middle of the Old World, and one day fire may break out there and set all Europe alight. The great mistake was made by Clemenceau, whose personal feelings and democratic prejudices were involved. They caused him to forget this diplomatic truth—if Austro-Hungary had not existed, we should have had to invent it.

As for Bulgaria, she is always the creature of her immediate interests. For the last fifteen years her politics have been self-contained; she has been the prey of military conspiracies and of revolutions. All diplomats fish in her troubled waters. Lately she has been pro-Italian, to-morrow, if the wind changes, she will be pro-German once more.

VI—ITALY

Italian policy was one of the great elements of danger in Europe, before it became a world danger.

ITALY

When the victors were dividing the spoil, they applied the brutal principle *va victis* to the vanquished, truly, but that did not mean that there was strict equality of division within their own camp. The first and largest helpings went to the strongest. The weakest (Italy) received the least. This was hardly fair. She had an increasing population and no colonies except some barren land in Eritrea and Somaliland, the small islands of the Dodecanese, and in the Libyan Desert Tripoli and Cyrenaica; she deserved better treatment. The Treaty of London (1915) and the Treaty of St. Jean de Maurienne (1917) had paid her for her entry into the war on the side of the Allies. They had opened a prospect of regaining all *Italia irridenta*, and thus accomplishing Italian unity. Moreover, they had actually promised large extensions of colonial territory in Asia Minor and Africa. These gains would have facilitated Italy's economic expansion.

But she was cruelly disillusioned. All she got was the Tyrol and Istria, to which was added in 1922 the port of Fiume, captured by d'Annunzio. This was a second edition of the capture of Wilna by Poland. Italy had to give up her claim to Dalmatia, although it was partly Italianate. It was given to Jugoslavia who became the dominant Power of the eastern Adriatic. As to the colonial territories, they were all gobbled up by the big wolves. A bone was thrown to Italy in the form of a rectification of the frontiers of Jubaland and Italian Somaliland, to which Great Britain agreed.

Italian national pride was wounded by this humiliating betrayal. Its inflamed condition was one of the causes of the growth of Fascism, which may be compared in this respect with National Socialism. Consequently, when Mussolini came

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to power in 1922, his policy was necessarily imperialist. He meant to regain the lost advantages by force. Italy never forgot the loss of Dalmatia, and as France was the guarantor of the new Yugoslavian State, she fell out with France. She believed that Paris and Belgrade constituted a danger for her, and she became a prey to the same phobia of encirclement which had attacked Berlin in 1914. She turned from one side to another in search of support. She turned to Hungary, which was friendly, to Bulgaria, whose young King Boris married Princess Giovanna, daughter of Victor-Emmanuel; to Greece, where the monarchy had fallen, and a period of discussion between the various parties had begun, which lasted until the final downfall of the Venizelists and the recall of the exiled king, who was, as every one knows, a great friend of Britain. Finally, Italy turned to Turkey, which under the modernizing influence of Mustapha Kemal, friend of Britain, France, and the U.S.S.R., had become a stable and vigorous young country. Rome aimed at using these alliances and tentative *ententes* to establish her hegemony both in Central Europe and in the Balkan Peninsula. One of the most important parts of the plan was the seizure of Albania, which would turn the flank of Yugoslavia.

The inspired press cried out against the injustice of the treaties and the need for revision. Mussolini arose to be their judge. He encouraged the Heimwehr Fascist movement in Austria and formally supported Germany at Geneva, until the advent of Hitler. Nazis and even the Führer himself were solemnly received at Venice or in Rome.

While thus acting in concert with Germany, Italy approached the U.S.S.R. at the time when all other nations

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still treated her as an outlaw. Italy recognized her officially and signed a commercial treaty with her. About 1930 the new grouping of powers seemed to be: Germany, Italy, Russia, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria against France and her allies.

Italy also wished to become a great naval power. This disturbed both London and Paris. The divergence of views appeared clearly at the Naval Conference of 1930. Italy's colonial policy was no less imperialist than her European policy.

After her failure at Corfu, she tried to become the mandatory Power for Syria in the place of France. In Central Africa she claimed that the frontiers of Libya should be extended to Lake Tchad, and that she should receive a mandate over the former German colonies in Central Africa, for example the Cameroons. She discussed with Britain and France the plan of periodical contributions from Ethiopia. In 1923 she forced Ethiopia to enter the League of Nations, hoping to arrange for the privileged economic exploitation of the country and later on to be granted a protectorate without having to go to war. On the coast of Arabia she even penetrated the Yemen, getting the start of Britain.

The Fascism of Mussolini was born, I repeat, of the unjust treaties. It brought Italy into dangerous relations with all her neighbours: (1) with Yugoslavia and the rest of the Little Entente which was opposed to the restoration of Austria-Hungary; (2) with France, because she favoured revision and seemed to be competing for naval supremacy in the Mediterranean; (3) with Britain, her one-time protector, because of

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her new naval influence in the Red Sea, which is part of the route to India.

At Stresa, in February, 1935, there seemed for a moment to be an improvement in the outlook, at least in the Mediterranean sphere. France and Italy were reconciled, and old-standing quarrels between them were settled, such as the status of Italians in Tunis, the cession of lands in the region of Lake Tchad, and freedom of economic expansion in Ethiopia. Britain and France and Italy joined in a protest against the rearmament of Germany, which Hitler had accomplished with considerable display. After 1934 Mussolini had looked askance at Hitler, whose power competed with his own. He now undertook to stand sentinel at the Brenner on the north of his beloved Tyrol, as the outpost of the new front against Germany.

But the trouble came from another quarter.

How could it be otherwise? For thirteen years the enthusiastic young nation had been stimulated; it had heard war glorified and victory hymned; a whole generation had been drenched with the greatness of ancient Rome. Italy with its fertile population crowded into the narrow 'Boot,' longed for expansion overseas. Great Britain would never allow this. So it was an inevitable consequence that there should be an explosion. Italy threw her sword into the scales and by so doing showed up all the evils of Fascism, which was only held together by its undeniable attempts at a social policy.

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VII—THE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES, THE UNITED STATES, JAPAN AND THE U.S.S.R.

To complete our survey of Europe, we must glance at those member-States of the League of Nations, who had enjoyed the great privilege of neutrality: Luxembourg, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland.

Their views were bounded by their commercial interests, and they were so well pleased not to be burdened with war budgets that they were agreeable to everybody. They were indeed privileged people, who had no territorial ambitions, but were glad to preserve their own inheritances, and improve them at their ease. While Europe was raving mad, they played the part of spectators, looking on at the epic drama; they were not afraid of what might happen in the end, because they knew well that in the end they would be the gainers. Their state of mind was rather like that of the United States and Japan, two great countries separated from one another and Europe by continents and oceans. Although perhaps there was already feeling between them which may ultimately lead to trouble in their part of the world, toward Old Europe they showed a sort of condescending disdain.

If the United States had been faithful to President Wilson and his principles, she would undoubtedly have played a principal part in the organization of Peace. Unfortunately she washed her hands of the whole business of the war. While France clung to the illusory League on account of the supposed needs of her security, and while Britain held by Geneva to obtain confirmation of her hegemony, America was only interested in the recovery of her huge loans from the Allies.

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Congress checkmated President Wilson, and thrust the Covenant into the basket reserved for 'scraps of paper.' The United States coldly refused to do anything towards the political settlement at the end of the war. They refused the Armenian Mandate. They had no wish to act as the impartial arbitrator who could bring in the independent judgment of the New World to redress the wrongs of the Old World.

Although they had become a world Power, the United States' view of the future was limited to America. Their main idea was the increase of the national wealth and the extension of their commercial preponderance in the markets of the world. They were competing with Britain for naval supremacy which they had half-won at the Washington Conference. They needed it, in exactly the same way as did Britain, for their ambitions were the same as those of Britain. They were building their strong navy and merchant service so as to keep up connexions between the homeland and its distant possessions.

Moreover, since the beginning of the twentieth century and the days of the first President Roosevelt, American imperialism had been growing and the United States were striving to make their influence predominate in the States of Latin America. They took Haiti and Nicaragua and attempted to carry the flag of Pan-americanism beyond the Panama Canal.

Absorbed as they were in the transformation of their economic system, which had been until then of the most old-fashioned capitalistic pattern, they occasionally glanced at European problems, at times with the eye of an observer, at times with that of an adviser. The

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problems which particularly interested them were those of the settlements of war debts (the Dawes Plan, the Young Plan, the Hoover Moratorium). They were sincerely peace-minded; they consented to the conclusion of the Kellogg Pact proposed by Briand; they helped to outlaw war; they even co-operated in the work of the Supreme Court at The Hague, and took an energetic part in the Disarmament Conference.

But in the long run they were disgusted by the bad faith of their creditors who all (except Herriot) refused to be bled any longer. They grew weary of the inability of Old Europe to recover from its war-neurosis, and they withdrew more and more completely to their own shores. Even when Geneva decided upon sanctions against Italy, the Neutrality Act made it clear to the League in no uncertain way that New York would never again take any part in the sterile quarrels of Europe. The President gave a good word to democracies, and sent dictators away with a flea in their ears. America laid an embargo on arms and munitions against any Power which had gone to war. Thus was puritan morality satisfied. But there was no embargo on trade in raw materials. Export is part of business in hand; a place left empty is quickly filled by someone else. Franklin Roosevelt had learned his lesson from Wilson.

Let us pass on to Japan, on the confines of Asia. In spite of her distance from Geneva she carried on her war-time collaboration with the Allies by sharing in their early labours for the reconstitution of the League of Nations. To her, however, the 'rightful cause' meant little. She joined France

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and Britain mainly to get possession of the fine German colony, the Bay of Kiao-Chau. But ill-gotten gains did not prosper, and in 1920 Japan was forced to restore Kiao-Chau to China.

The volcanic islands of Japan are far too small for their population. The Japanese are feverishly anxious for military and naval expansion, which certainly will not stop with the absorption of Korea and Port Arthur. The politicians of the Land of the Rising Sun quickly saw that her destiny was not to be worked out on the shores of Lake Lemman, but at Mukden and at Peking, not to say at Nanking and at Shanghai: so they began to work out a twofold plan, for the conquest of China and for predominance in the Pacific.

Japan had been ordained as the third naval power, next after Britain and America, at the Washington Conference. Having thus reached an important position in great international meetings, Japan turned away from Europe. She regarded it as she regarded the rest of the universe, only as a commercial dumping ground. She felt strong enough now to go forward on her imperialist way.

She got a hold in Manchuria, and in 1933 reft it from China. We shall see how the ensuing conflict was laid before the League of Nations, how months dragged on with palavers and commissions, and how Japan finally slammed the door behind her with unconcealed insolence. Geneva was still trying to settle a definition of the word 'aggressor.' The Great Powers could agree neither upon the principles involved nor upon their application, so they gave way, being satisfied with trading to the two belligerents armaments and all that they needed. The invaders had been much blamed, but they did

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not mind that, as they were now free to push their advantages.

The scandalous immunity of this 'realistic' policy will always be one of the most glaring illustrations of the weakness of Geneva. We are getting to the end of our tour of the world. From Tokio let us return to Geneva via Moscow.

Russia marches with Japan in the farthest part of Asia. She has as neighbours those turbulent little Japs who beat the armies of the last Tsar in 1905. She marches also with Europe, that continent which had banned her since the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Thus old Russia, now the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, bears upon both continents with her gigantic weight.

During the first years that followed the Peace, the U.S.S.R. kept at arms length from the Old World—all the more because the latter was carrying on a merciless war against it, in addition to its sentence of excommunication. The Old World had treated Russia as a guilty party, regardless of the right of a nation to settle its own affairs. States, whose own history recorded revolutions quite as dreadful as that of the Bolsheviks, had condemned Russia in the name of humanity. For the Russian revolutionaries had committed the unpardonable sin: they had attacked the sacred rights of property.

The victorious powers actually tried to put the plague-stricken nation in 'quarantine'; not only did they do this, but they supported and financed the attacks of the White Armies, under Youdenitch, Deniken, Koltchak, and Wrangel. They hoped that they themselves or their clients would profit

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by taking from Russia the rich Ukraine, the Crimea, or Eastern Siberia.

Following the lead of the Eurasian party, which in pre-war days had been the Slavophile movement, Russia naturally turned towards Asia. She believed in her mission, to teach and to raise up the peoples of Asia, and to release them from the tutelage of the Western nations. She dreamed of extending her own 'dictatorship' of the proletariat into a world-wide revolution: she called the dark races to the complete emancipation of the Gospel of Marx. Bolshevik Congresses at Moscow were attended by Chinese, Hindus, Moroccans, Egyptians, and even by negroes.

But man cannot live by philosophy alone; to live, one needs the capitalists' money. I am speaking of the time when the peasants rebelled against the rigorous application of communist principles, when the markets were bare and foreign money boycotted. Then Lenin gave up the absolute perfection of communism and proclaimed the necessity of a new economic policy, the N.E.P. He dreamed of industry on a gigantic scale, such as Stalin afterwards achieved, but to buy the necessary machinery for the Five-Year Plan, he had to dilute his principles a little.

When the preliminaries for the Disarmament Conference began, Soviet delegates arrived in Geneva. Soon, from being observers only, and somewhat suspect at that, they became important parties to the proceedings, thanks to their straightforwardness and their logical grip.

From 1927 onwards the U.S.S.R. has lost no opportunity to show its attachment to the principles of co-operation and disarmament. The States of Europe have renewed diplomatic

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relations with her; so, too, quite recently has America. In 1934 she entered the League, thus taking the place of Germany, who had imitated Japan in giving up membership, and so leaving vacant the seat of a permanent member.

Finally, in 1935 she concluded a treaty of mutual assistance with France, thus completing the earlier agreement signed in Briand's time by Dovgalesky and Philippe Berthelot. It would be a grave mistake to see a real change of opinion behind this new tack. In spite of its development towards democratic forms, Russia is faithful to the socialist conceptions of the earliest days of revolution. But she has learned the art of compromise from her contact with the old school of diplomacy. The determining factor in her approach to Europe and to France is her hostility to Hitler, the anti-Marxist, and her fears that his imperialist ambitions will be directed against her. Threatened by Germany and by Japan, Moscow has thought it wise to make friends with those who might stand side by side with her in the event of danger.

The old menace has reappeared and, under its pressure, the former hybrid alliance between France and Russia has been recemented by an astonishing turn of fortune.

This alliance has been sympathetically received by all those who have always believed the Soviet revolution to be the dawn of a better future. But all the *beati possidentes* are uneasy about it. The average Frenchman is afraid of being drawn into a war in which no interests of his own are involved. He believes truly enough in the indivisibility of peace, but he asks himself whether in reality 'collective security' is not limited to the one article of particular national interests.

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Will the U.S.S.R. be able to import sanity into the chaotic atmosphere of Geneva? It is in this atmosphere that we must now watch the League stumbling on its way; its path is beset with obstacles and pitfalls, and it has neither material nor moral support.

CHAPTER II

FIRST STEPS

IN spite of all the defects of the organization at Geneva, its first measure justified some degree of hopefulness (if one disregards the unfortunate episode of Greece and Turkey). The League intervened in the innumerable disputes arising out of the treaties, and in every case threw its weight on the side of equity. In these disputes the parties were sometimes former belligerents, sometimes former allies, and sometimes even neutrals; consequently the task before the League was anything but easy.

Slowly but surely the truth was driven home that the treaties and their subsidiaries had defeated the hopes of those who had made them. They had emphatically not restored peace and tranquillity to Europe. The nations who were suffering under them turned to the virgin tribunal, in the belief that Geneva could help. Thus during the first four years of its existence the League of Nations was exceedingly active and obtained results which seemed full of promise.

I—A GOOD BEGINNING AND SOME SUCCESSFUL ARBITRATIONS

One of the technical organizations attached to the General Secretariat certainly started well. This was the Economic and Financial Section which sought to establish a world co-operation. It organized two international economic conferences—the Brussels Conference of 1920 and the Geneva Conference

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of 1922. At the former, which was a failure, thirty-nine countries were represented. Its aim was to devise a scheme of subsidies for States that might want credit to finance their imports.

In the political sphere results were better. In 1920 the League had to deal with the Eupen and Malmédy dispute between Germany and Belgium, the Aland Islands dispute between Sweden and Finland, and the Vilna dispute between Lithuania and Poland. It was concerned even with the Tacna-Arica dispute involving Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. In each case the parties bowed to the League's rulings.

On 20th September, 1920, the districts of Eupen and Malmédy, which are mainly French-speaking, were assigned to Belgium. Germany, with much more serious matters to think about at the moment, raised no difficulty. The Aland Islands, which occasioned an embittered controversy between Sweden and Finland and which, though lately part of the Russian Empire, had a considerable Swedish population, were the subject of long and complicated discussions.

In 1921 at length a decision was reached. The islands remained under Finnish sovereignty, but they were to be demilitarized, while at the same time assurances were given that the Swedish language, culture, and local traditions would be respected. The Convention was guaranteed by the League of Nations.

The Tacna-Arica affair was likewise easily disposed of. The disputed territory reverted to Chile. Bolivia and Peru acquiesced.

The solution of the Polish-Lithuanian question was not so simple. Hardly had the League taken up the matter and

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dispatched a commission to delimit the frontier in the Vilna region when Poland took the law into her own hands: General Zeligowski occupied the town. The Polish Government, while repudiating the rebel general, kept possession of Vilna, and as Lithuania refused to recognize the *fait accompli* a rupture between the two States followed. Thenceforward normal relations between the two countries were never to be resumed.

It was the first check and augured ill for the future. It meant that, despite the League, the reign of force was by no means over and that the decrees of the Geneva Council—a judge with no policemen to back him—could be flouted with impunity. This first sign of cracking, however, did no apparent damage to the prestige of the League seeing that in the course of the years 1920, 1921, and 1922 ten new States (Austria, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Luxembourg, Albany, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Hungary) asked for and obtained admission. Geneva and its international rôle were growing in importance.

The next business was to settle finally the frontiers as between the various States that had been reshaped by the Peace treaties—for example, the Græco-Albano-Jugoslav frontier, the Hungarian frontier between Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, and the frontier of Finland and the U.S.S.R.

Of all these delimitations the one that gave the most trouble was the partition of Silesia between Poland and Germany. South Silesia, with its great mineral wealth and numerous Polish population, was claimed by both Powers.

On 12th October, 1921, on the motion of M. Briand, then president of the Supreme Council of the Allies, the case was

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referred to the League Council with the request that it should give its opinion as to the line which it was the duty of the Allied and associated Powers to establish. The point was to interpret the result of the plebiscite that had been held some months before. French and British were once more in complete disaccord: local troubles had broken out; something had to be done and that quickly.

Geneva set to work mobilizing its experts, from whose labours there emerged an award which suggested the line of partition that appeared most equitable, regard being had, on the one hand, to political and economic necessities and, on the other, to the ethnography of the disputed territory. The award also set forth the measures proper to be taken for the maintenance of exchange and the protection of minorities.

On 15th May, 1922, these suggestions, having been approved by the Allies, were accepted by the parties to the dispute, and Germany, much against her will, had to sign with Poland the Upper Silesia Convention. This was a distinct score for the League, which here supported the victors against the vanquished.

At the same time the League of Nations found itself entrusted with two kinds of missions which bade fair to turn it into something like a board of directors for the whole earth. It made itself directly responsible for the organization of autonomous territories (the Free City of Danzig and the government of the Saar): it arranged the allotment of colonial mandates. It was, of course, true—and here we see the utter hypocrisy of the Powers—that the most important mandates had been apportioned by the Governments represented at the Peace Conference, the strongest taking the best bits for them-

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selves. The Mandates Commission, consisting of nine members, would have nothing to do but examine the annual reports submitted by the mandatories.

Hence in 1921 and 1922 there were first the 'A' mandates, *i.e.*, those of France for Togoland and the Cameroons, of Great Britain and Belgium for the former German East Africa: at one stroke the Reich with its sixty million inhabitants had been robbed of its colonial outlet. Next came the 'B' mandates, namely those of France for Syria, and Great Britain's for Palestine. The mandates embodied a new principle: the colonial territories were not held by mere right of conquest, but as a trust conferred by the League of Nations as guardian of the common interests of mankind.

A fine theory, but what has it been worth in practice? Here the League of Nations is merely an automatic machine working according to the ambitions and desires of the Great Powers. These have kept their disguised annexations, and all suggestions for a revision of the mandates have been ignored.

The organization of the autonomous territories presented more difficulties. Some show had to be made of maintaining the Wilsonian principles—so loudly proclaimed and so promptly violated—without infringing upon the strategic and economic interests of the victors, and this resulted in some awkward cuts. Territories that the Allies were unwilling to transfer openly to this or that Power were made autonomous States under the League of Nations.

Thus was created the Free City of Danzig, governed by a High Commissioner who was concerned with the settlement of ex-German territory and tried to harmonize its statutory

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position with the economic interests of Poland (creation of a port for Polish vessels at Danzig). This official was bound to have many delicate arbitral duties to discharge. As to the Saar, from 1920 onwards a Governing Commission appointed by the League Council carried on a kind of double-entry existence, the subsoil of this obviously Germanic earth having been granted to France for the time being as compensation for the damage to the Nord coalfield.

II—FROM THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF AUSTRIA TO THE FIRST ANGLO-ITALIAN CLASH (THE CORFU INCIDENT AND ETHIOPIA'S ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE)

While able, in spite of all the difficulties that beset its path, to settle satisfactorily certain matters of secondary importance, the League proved incapable of tackling the vital problem, the neuralgic point of the peace, Franco-German antagonism, which had been further complicated by the rigidity of British policy.

These shifting and tragic aspects provide the elements of a tangled drama of which the action is not confined to Geneva. Council and Assembly could but look on at what was in effect a continuation of the war. The situation was beyond them: for the time being they confined themselves to registration work.

As early as 1921 the Austrian Government had informed Geneva of their economic and financial straits. By way of assisting them, the League had considered the cancellation of the mortgages upon Vienna held by the Allied and associated Governments. The latter's refusal had only made the situation

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worse. Owing to the bungling of the negotiators at Versailles, thousands of human beings were dying of hunger. In 1923 Austria uttered a desperate appeal, and was even contemplating what Paris and London liked least of all—union with Germany. Thanks to two generous spirits, Mr. Balfour and M. Léon Bourgeois, the League adopted a second plan—the raising of a loan. While this enabled the exhausted State to breathe until 1925, it required in return radical reforms which, by balancing the Budget, made the principle of Austrian sovereignty secure. The amount thus raised was 860,000,000 gold francs at 6 per cent. In view of their special concern that Vienna should not throw itself into the arms of Berlin, France, Britain, Czechoslovakia, and Italy each guaranteed 20 per cent. of the loan, the remaining 20 per cent. being taken up by Spain, Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium.

Thus launched anew, Austria managed, temporarily at least, to put her finances in order. Although fear of the Anschluss was at the root of this display of solidarity, it was none the less an example of what could have been done through League methods if these had always been applied in a true spirit of international co-operation.

Another pseudo-success. As is well known, early in 1923 some Italian officers, employed upon the delimitation of the Græco-Albanian frontier, were murdered on Greek territory. The Italian Government (Mussolini) not having been given prompt reparation, decided to occupy Corfu. The League Council intervened, and prevailed upon Greece to give satisfaction to Italy and on Italy to withdraw her troops. The acceptance of such a decision by the Fascist dictatorship was a conspicuous success for the League. It is true that Britain,

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ever Græcophile—as was notably apparent during the victorious campaign of the Turks in Asia Minor—had sent her Mediterranean fleet to Corfu, and it was before London rather than Geneva that Mussolini beat his retreat.

Can we trace a relation of cause and effect between the Duce's resentment and the entry of Ethiopia into the League of Nations on 28th September, 1923? The fact remains that it was about this time that Ras Tafari, then regent and now the Emperor Haile Selassie, applied for admission. He had for sponsors Italy who, hungry for colonial expansion, had been dreaming since the end of the nineteenth century of a peaceful revenge for Adowa, and France, whose delegates at Geneva included with MM. Léon Bourgeois and Albert Lebrun (the future President of the Republic) M. Gabriel Hanotaux, who had been minister for the Colonies at the time of the Fashoda affair, and was *persona grata* with his friend Poincaré at the Quai d'Orsay.

Ras Tafari, who had newly returned from a visit to Paris, a convert to European ideas, saw the opportunity for modernizing his backward country. Count Bonin Longare, the Italian delegate, pleaded his cause before the Council, and the French delegate, Henri de Jouvenel, demanded that Ethiopia should be admitted forthwith. The British delegate was the only one to suggest a doubt of the wisdom of the step. London objected because the spectacle of France and Italy in agreement was not to its taste. Why give so much importance to a Power upon whose territory, in virtue of the tripartite Anglo-Franco-Italian agreement of 1906, Great Britain had further ambitious designs? (Source of the Blue Nile) . . . But Rome, supported by the Quai d'Orsay, carried

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its point. It saw in Ras Tafari a docile client securely established at Geneva. Thus was set in motion the fateful conflict whose dangers are still menacing us.

III—FROM THE GENEVA PROTOCOL TO LOCARNO

In 1924 the hour seemed to have come for the League at last to take its place as the organizer of Europe. In France the Left Bloc had succeeded the National Bloc, while Labour, in the person of Ramsay MacDonald, was in office in London. Herriot, a democrat by definition, might then along with Briand, whom he sent to Geneva, have brought to bear on the situation something like an international spirit if he had not been burdened with a deadweight of animosity and anti-German prejudice. None the less, amid a storm of Nationalist abuse, he attempted, in co-operation with the British Prime Minister, to direct the League towards a stricter conception of solidarity, and succeeded in getting accepted, in principle at least, a character more precise in its terms. This was the famous Geneva Protocol, a kind of new Covenant, defining and formulating an equitable jurisprudence among the associated nations, which would have been capable of consolidating peace if it had not been directed against an absent Germany.

Notwithstanding the manifest prejudice it displayed against the late enemy, this document was the most remarkable that had been drafted since the original Covenant, because, more than any other, it embodied an almost mystic faith in the possibility of a peaceful settlement of disputes under the ægis of Geneva. On the basis of Arbitration, Security, and Disarmament it tried to create (still against Germany) a solidarity clothed with the noblest motives.

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“Every State which resorts to war in violation of the undertakings contained in the Covenant or in the present Protocol is an aggressor. Violation of the rules laid down for a demilitarized zone shall be held equivalent to resort to war” (Art. 10).

The signatory States undertook to apply economic, financial, and military sanctions to the aggressor, and “in conformity with the spirit of the present Protocol, the signatory States agree that the whole cost of any military, naval, or air operations undertaken for the repression of an aggressor under the terms of the Protocol, and reparations for all losses suffered by individuals, whether civilians or combatants, and for all material damage caused by the operation of both sides; shall be borne by the aggressor State up to the extreme limit of its capacity” (Art. 15).

A strong line and a just one; but its strength and justice would have had more point if the League, instead of being the guardian of unjust treaties, had had for its sole aim the maintenance of a peace based harmoniously on equality among the nations. The fatal flaw of the Protocol was simply that it granted a postulate that is essentially and demonstrably false. The solidarity of all the Powers was here invoked only against an aggressor who, if not actually named, was none the less clearly indicated. Hence, the only result of attempting to rule out every claim was to aggravate the sense of grievance and so incur a serious risk of the very worst happening.

None the less, Herriot's scheme was interesting in that it contemplated the immediate possibility of proceeding to the reduction of armaments. To that end the Council was instructed to summon a conference of the signatory States

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to meet at Geneva on 15th June, 1925. All the other States, whether members of the League or not, were to be invited to take part. As is well known, the instruction remained practically a dead letter until 1932. A special commission was appointed to adjust the necessary preliminaries. Eight years had to be spent on this preparatory work before the Conference could meet, and even then there was no common ground of method or aim. Its deplorable conclusion will be the subject of the third part of this book.

Herriot's lead, however, limited as it was, deserved the praises given it by Briand from the League tribune in a speech that breathed a faith in the future that was to be cruelly falsified by events. What a gulf yawns between the illusions of 1924 and the reality of 1936! As soon as the question of arbitration and security is settled, said the permanent delegate of France, you shall see France "in the forefront of those who will tackle this great problem of disarmament," and meanwhile "she is proud to adhere to the Protocol." Britain was not so proud. Ramsay MacDonald on her behalf accepted the Protocol, but Baldwin's Conservative Administration had second thoughts and refused to sign. Guarantee mutual assistance in every case of aggression! British opinion was not ripe for so unconditional an obligation. But eleven years hence, when her African interests are threatened, Britain will be found quite agreeable to international solidarity—nay, will insist upon it.

The Protocol presented on 1st October, 1924, was adopted. Immediately after the sitting fourteen States signed, and others shortly followed suit. One Government—Czechoslovakia—even ratified it. But while the Council at its annual session

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was proceeding to the consideration of the various questions arising out of the Protocol, the Foreign Minister in the new British Cabinet, Sir Austen Chamberlain, asked for an adjournment to next session in order that his Government might have an opportunity, along with the Dominions, of examining the document in greater detail.

Three months later, in March, 1925, Sir Austen read a long statement setting out the reasons why his Government did not see their way to adopt the Protocol. For the second time since the war Britain evaded the obligation of mutual assistance. She meant to go on holding "the balance of power" and playing her old part of arbiter between France, Germany, and the other European States.

When Herriot was superseded by Painlevé, Briand returned to the Quai d'Orsay, whence, following Cannes, he had been evicted by the fatal Poincarist conspiracy that culminated in the Ruhr occupation. Unlike that of his predecessors, the policy he unweariedly pursued was not based on the perpetual exclusion of Germany, but aimed at letting the League play the part that the nations expected of it and preparing the way for a Franco-German reconciliation, "the corner-stone of a pacified Europe"—pacified and perhaps some day federated. At the same time—for the mystical Breton was far more clear-sighted than his fellow-statesmen—there was no question of advancing along the new line without the assured support of Britain and likewise of America.

The moment seemed favourable. In the previous year—when the moneylenders who had engineered the occupation of the Ruhr had vanished from the scene after ruining Germany and incidentally seeing their own money go up in smoke

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—a committee of international experts (French, British, Belgian, Italian, and American) had launched a scheme that was dubbed by the name of its begetter.

The Dawes Plan, based on Germany's capacity to pay, set up a scheme of payment by annuities which were not fixed but varied from year to year according to the country's degree of prosperity. Berlin, after the mad period of inflation when a potato cost a million marks, re-established its currency by the creation of the 'Reichsmark' on a gold parity. The amounts that Germany was to pay—a milliard marks for the first four years and then two milliards—were to be included in the ordinary budget. The Reich railways were placed under international control as security for the payments. France was to have 65 per cent. of the arrears. The plan was to come into operation in April, 1925. It was in the same month that Briand, not without more or less opposition from his colleagues, entered upon the conversations with Sir Austen Chamberlain and Gustav Stresemann that were to end in the signature of the Pact of Locarno.

I have elsewhere* summarized this glorious page of history, which to-day makes melancholy reading:

On the afternoon of October 16 the treaty securing the inviolability of the Belgian and French Rhine frontiers and pledging the High Contracting Parties "not to engage in any attack upon or invasion of the other, and in no case to resort to war" was signed simultaneously with four arbitration conventions, viz., Germany and Belgium, Germany and France, Germany and Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Luther and Stresemann of the one part, and Vandervelde, Briand, Skazinski, and Benes of the other, had previously initialled a protocol embodying the general effect of the conventions.

Stresemann at this critical hour said: "Our meeting at Locarno

* Aristide Briand. Paris, Flammarion.

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marks the beginning of the evolution of European peace, an important stage in the improvement of international relations. We believe that it is by living peaceably with one another that we can secure this evolution of States . . . Locarno must be, not the end, but the beginning of wholehearted co-operation." In like manner Briand, his official duty being ended, gave his personal utterance: "If all we have done here is to negotiate the terms of a treaty and then each of us goes home, trusting to luck for the realization of the promises it contains, our labour will have been in vain. If what we have now accomplished does not correspond to a new spirit, if it does not mark the opening of an era of trust, it will not have the results we expect. Between our two countries there remain occasions of friction; there are sore points. The Pact signed here must be a balm for these bruises. Existing difficulties must be smoothed away . . . I am sure that France will understand the full bearing of this document and that a conciliatory feeling will ensue between us . . . When that has come to pass we can work together in every department for the realization of our ideal, which is a Europe working out its destiny, and faithful to the noble past of its civilization."

Alas!

IV—FROM GERMANY'S ACCESSION TO GENEVA TO THE THOIRY LUNCHEON

The corollary of the Locarno Pact, according to Briand's notion, was the entry of Germany into the League. Unfortunately the accommodation so well initiated, if hailed in some quarters with feelings of relief and enthusiasm, had in others to cope with blind and bitter hostility as well as the meanest sort of pettifogging. It was more than a year before the era of confidence, so brilliantly inaugurated, became a reality. While Nationalism intrigued in Paris, at Geneva, Spain, Brazil, and Poland wrangled about Germany's permanent seat: Madrid and Rio-de-Janeiro withdrew from the Council. At

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last, on 10th September, 1926, after a month of petty squabbling, Stresemann was able to take his seat at the same table with Briand. Lack of space prevents me from quoting the admirable speeches delivered by the two protagonists of the young *entente* on that occasion. One faith, one hope animated them. If the proclamation of the Pact from the balcony of the Locarno Town Hall had evoked the cheers of a cosmopolitan crowd, the emotion that overspread the Assembly at the declarations of these two men—men still widely differing in political outlook but united by the same ideal for the future of mankind—afforded an indescribable, an unprecedented moment. For it seemed that thenceforward war was to be no more—that the Franco-German reconciliation was the prelude to the reconciliation of all the nations.

A fortnight later Briand, who did not consider the agreement reached at Locarno valid until it had been ratified by the League, availed himself of his position as President of the Council, to obtain the latter's approval. On 25th September the Assembly declared that such an agreement should not be restricted to the Rhine district but should be extended "to all parts of the world." The door was opened to frank co-operation and genuine mutual assistance.

About the same period Briand provided another proof of the value which, with all its imperfections, an instrument of peace like the League could have in his hands. Greece and Bulgaria had nearly come to blows over a frontier incident and there was grave danger of a new war setting the Balkan neighbours at odds once more. Briand cited the two nations to appear at Geneva and ultimately they bowed to inter-

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national authority. Not a settlement of the first magnitude, perhaps, but a good omen for the future.

Briand's hopes for the future were not unreasonable. There were, to be sure, dark spots that would have to be removed, especially that matter on which before long Stresemann insisted—the outcry of the German people against the humiliating admission of war guilt extorted at Versailles (Art. 231). But, far from despairing, he had faith in the virtue of good will. Unfortunately political passions were already raging in France with a violence which has since, if anything, become worse. Suddenly they came to a head.

The Painlevé Ministry had been succeeded by the Briand-Caillaux Ministry, which was asking the Chamber for full powers to deal with a financial situation that had been brought to a crisis by international speculation. Herriot brought the Government down, and came into office, only to be turned out himself next day and rejoin Poincaré on the doormat.

The new Government could not in decency take Briand from the Quai d'Orsay after the success of his policy, but immediately set to work to thwart it. Briand did not lose heart: he meant to follow up with Stresemann the contacts that had been established. The financial horizon in Germany was clearing, thanks to the Dawes Plan which was at last in operation. This was the very moment when the embarrassed French Treasury wanted new money.

In September, 1927, Briand and Stresemann were both at Geneva for the annual session of the Assembly. They took advantage of a fine Sunday morning to meet at a little inn in the neighbourhood. This was the famous Thoiry luncheon. According to the account given by Stresemann, “the evacua-

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tion of the occupied territories (Rhineland) was discussed in connexion with certain financial concessions to Germany, in particular the cancellation of the debentures on the German railways created under the Dawes Plan. At the same time the question of the retrocession of the Saar was raised."

It was not in the power of either Stresemann or Briand to bring this conversation to a successful issue. No sooner had it been submitted for consideration in Berlin than it incurred the ill-will of the American experts. The New York bankers declared that there could be no question of cancelling the German railway debentures under the Dawes Plan inasmuch as France had not ratified the agreement for the settlement of her own war debts to America.

Poincaré, on the other hand, still clung to the *status quo*. He revolted at the idea of giving up the Rhine territories before the stipulated time even in consideration of anticipated payments, while as to the retrocession of the Saar, he would not hear of it. And so, after struggling with the blindness of hatred, Briand's generous and far-sighted intentions found their way blocked by a double wall.

CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF BRIAND'S LEADERSHIP

I—FROM THE BRIAND-KELLOG PACT TO THE GENERAL ARBITRATION PACT, AND THE MEMORANDUM ON THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION

LOCARNO seemed to be the dawn of a new day. The League had marked time until that point; then, after the admission of Germany, she was to all appearance stepping out at last towards her true goal, of which she had a momentary glimpse. In spite of constant hindrances, this period was her hey-day. She was advancing, and in this advance it was Briand who set the pace.

In those days it was possible to believe that the League would become the supreme tribunal for all nations in their longings for peace and justice. Its weaknesses might be cured, and a new spirit was giving it life. Nations were only just beginning to believe in the League, and to apply to her for a solution of their difficulties and differences.

It was in this sense that the League was understood by men in every country, and within the League itself, and there were many such men, in love with the same ideal as Briand cherished. But no one understood, loved, and served the League as he did. He breathed his life into it, until the day of his death. This period of international history must always be identified with the man who attempted the super-human task of transforming the League. He was the only

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man who could possibly have succeeded, and might have done so had not the League been burdened beyond its strength by the crushing weight of its past history. France, under Poincaré, and her allies, were full of suspicion, fearing that one day the demand for revision of the treaties must come to a head, and the entry of Germany into the League produced no effect upon their attitude.

While Italy and Britain gradually gave up their hostility to Germany, Paris continued the policy of encirclement, with the aid of Poland and the Little Entente.

It was a never-ceasing struggle between the policy of the *status quo* and the policy of living development, and it affected Geneva itself. Briand wished for real peace at the earliest possible moment, but he knew that at times one must go slow, at times one must even stop the clock. The fact that the entry of the nations into the Promised Land did not depend upon him alone, makes his faith in his beloved League of Nations all the more touching. At all times he sang the praises of the League, he spoke of the useful work which made up for the time wasted in searching and groping for solutions. Such waste there had to be, because of the selfishness of individual interests.

After all, these were minor matters. The League was the only permanent international organization capable of activities which on the whole had so far been salutary. This was Briand's view, and that of all the peace-loving people who still believed in the effectiveness of the League. But he saw clearly the weakness of the Geneva Assembly, and after 1927 he wished to widen the scope of the Locarno guarantees by gaining American support for them. It goes without saying that

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such support would be moral support only. The United States resembled Britain in their reluctance to take sides again in the unappeased feud between France and Germany.

At Washington the American Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellog, was carried away by Briand's scheme for the substitution of law for force, and the outlawry of war as a means of settlement of disputes. It did not take Briand and Kellog long to agree. An arbitration-agreement was reached between the United States and France. Then America made further proposals. Why not extend this useful agreement to other countries? Negotiations began. The question of arbitration had been raised before; it had been one of the three main issues in Herriot's Protocol. Arbitration, Security, and Disarmament—these were the three foundation stones of the Temple of Peace as designed by the true believers of Geneva. But unfortunately the eye of faith was purblind.

Briand, on the other hand, realized that compulsory arbitration does not really solve either the problem of security nor that of disarmament, and indeed it is only practicable in cases where the nations that are parties to the arbitration enjoy complete equality of rights. But he hoped that when war had been outlawed, and branded as a crime, the nations at Geneva would be all the more inclined to accept arbitration as a means of settlement. Exchange of views lasted for some considerable time.

At last, in August, 1928, the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy was solemnized; the famous 'Briand-Kellog Pact' was signed in Paris. The Quai d'Orsay resounded with congratulatory and hopeful orations, and twenty-seven nations foreswore themselves by silent consent.

BRIAND-KELLOG PACT

France, Britain, America, and Germany, and (let it be noted) Japan and Italy had actually signed the Pact.

A noble declaration of Peace had been made. It remained to follow it up by practical action which should give it validity. In September of the same year, at the beginning of the annual session of the Assembly, the voice of Briand was heard again, and doubtless most of the member-States listened gladly. Some still hung back: for instance, Germany, who feared a coalition of the conquerors against her, should difficulties arise. The voice of the apostle cried: "Until you are filled with the spirit of peace, until you have created the moral conditions which allow of the growth of confidence, you are wilfully deceiving the nations when you tell them that it is impossible to make war."

His words went far beyond the Quai Wilson. He was addressing his own compatriots as well as their former foes. The picture which he drew of the League of Nations as it should be brings out the full contrast between the League of his dreams and the League as it was and still is. It makes pathetic reading. Briand himself felt this contrast when he said: "There is no chance of the establishment of a real Peace in the world, unless all member-States realize clearly that they are all members of the same human family, the universal family, thinking universally, working for the coming of full day. What work is more worthy for the sun to shine upon than this: Peace!" And he ended: "Come, gentlemen, all forward towards Peace, by the way of Arbitration!"

Thus on 26th September, 1928, the League of Nations adopted "The General Arbitration Pact for the peaceable settlement of Disputes." It provided procedure for conciliation

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in all cases of disputes (Cap. 1). It set up judicial and arbitral procedure for judicial cases (Cap. 2), and arbitral procedure for other differences (Cap. 3). Forty-four nations adopted the Pact, which was to become operative on 16th August, 1929.

Thus it seemed that a great advance had been made. Alas! it was in appearance only. When a nation had determined on war, she always eluded the obligations to which she was bound. Three instances have proved this since 1929. The Kellogg Pact, like the Covenant of the League, stabilized unjust conditions. What was really needed was revision of the treaties. A second defect was that the Pact allowed the right of self-defence, and this admission leaves the door open to all wars of aggression. Since men first discovered the use of weapons, has it not always been the other fellow that began it?

I repeat: what good does it do to outlaw war, when law is broken daily and is losing all force? What good does it do to brand war as criminal when every man and woman in the world is provided with the means of preparing war, when, at the appropriate hour, they will be compelled to make war? And all this in the name of unjustifiable or even of justifiable interests. It is obvious that no country and no Government should have power to order general mobilization without a previous general referendum. But further, neither a democracy nor a dictatorship should have the chance of intoxicating their people in the name of Patriotism, drugging them with lies and violence administered by their propaganda, and this daily!

Briand hoped that he had converted America and Britain to the cause of Peace and international co-operation. But he believed that both Peace and international co-operation needed

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some real platform within the League, if they were to become more than empty words. The ground he chose was the economic union of Europe.

He had been thinking of this for four years. But there was nothing to be done at Geneva, until certain difficulties had been overcome, and certain national grievances dealt with; nothing indeed could be done until every nation realized the interdependence of them all, at least as far as commerce and industry were concerned.

Briand knew that plans for readjustment in Europe on military and territorial lines would almost certainly founder, so great were the difficulties. But he thought the possibilities were greater in the economic sphere, and he attempted to clear up the financial debris of the war as a first step. From this attempt came, first, the end of the story of reparations and, secondly, the preliminaries to a reconstruction of Europe.

Thirty-three months after Thoiry—Poincaré being still in power and Germany collapsing under her debt—it had become necessary to call a fresh conference of experts to modify the Dawes Plan. Their intricate discussions led to the evolution of the Young Plan, after four months.

Germany's debt was now assessed at 36 milliard 800 million gold marks. The annuities were divided into conditional annuities, which might be made subject to a moratorium, and unconditional annuities which must be paid in any event. The object of this was that the Powers who were Germany's creditors and America's debtors should thus be provided with the funds needed for reparations and for their own debts. A Bank of International Settlements seated at Basle was to act as intermediary between the Reich and its

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creditors. Thus the financial control of Germany by the Powers disappeared.

The capitalization of long-term loans increased the principal to 100 milliard gold marks or 600 milliard paper francs in round figures. Three-quarters of this sum was to be paid in thirty-seven conditional annuities, conditional that is on the debtor's solvency, and the rest in twenty-two unconditional annuities payable between 1936 and 1988.

Thus there was no real prospect of getting rid of a debt computed at such usurious rates, and tied down upon future generations for the next thirty-seven years.

France was to take 43 million marks from the repayment of this fabulous and highly doubtful debt. She had to bind herself to pay back all the millions she had borrowed from America. This agreement was the last act of Poincaré before he left office. He fell ill and resigned. Briand took his place as President of the Council, and during his short term of office he presided at The Hague Conference, at which the Allies fell out over the spoils of victory.

Germany gained only the one advantage from the Young Plan: its ratification was immediately to be followed by the evacuation of the Rhineland. This had been expected though the occupation still had two more years to run. This was in 1930.

When Tardieu succeeded Briand, he kept Briand at the Quai d'Orsay, where indeed he was a fixture. Tardieu was faced with the duty of making restitution of the Rhenish districts which were pledged to France. The reactionary press burst into abuse and insults. These were aimed at Briand who had been accused ever since Locarno of having betrayed

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the interests of his country for the benefit of Germany. Stresemann, his fellow-worker, was dead. Briand was sixty-seven, he was ill, he was growing bent and old, but he never lost heart. The worse grew the condition of Europe, the nearer came the crisis, the brighter became his courage.

The crisis was world wide; it arose from the blindness of capitalists who owned machinery which they could not control. They believed only in increasing profits without end, by increasing production. The result was underconsumption and unemployment. In some countries the numbers of the unemployed rose to millions. In Europe the position was perhaps intensified by the territorial changes and extensions of frontier made by the treaties. Each country defended its trade and industry by putting up barbed wire entanglements in the form of tariffs.

Some years before a World Economic Conference had met at Geneva to seek remedies for the beginnings of this evil. It had obtained some few tariff reductions, but the truce had not lasted long. Briand had perceived the remedy in the very gravity of the danger. He had spoken on it in the French Chamber, and had continually worked at the subject, preparing the ground in personal conversations at Geneva. The public sessions of the Council and of the Assembly in the Electoral Building and the Hotel on the Quai Wilson, are less important than the private meetings between the more influential delegates in other hotels.

In the tenth Session of the Assembly in 1929 he had already explained his new idea: "I believe that between nations who are grouped geographically as are the nations of Europe, there should exist some sort of federal board. They ought to have

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the chance of meeting at any time, of discussing their common interests, and making joint resolutions. There should, in a word, be a real link between them, which would allow them to meet any serious situation should such arise. I would strain every nerve, gentlemen, to create such a link."

He made it clear that this new bond would in no way detract from the authority of the League. It was to be not a superior but a co-ordinate. He envisaged a sort of economic Parliament, a body available for consultation, in constant session, carrying further the intermittent action of the Geneva Assembly. He succeeded in interesting twenty-seven nations. At one of the luncheons which he used to give with such cordiality, the representatives of these States asked him to present a Memorandum on the subject.

II—THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

Briand had been the apostle of Franco-German reconciliation; now he became the prophet of the United States of Europe. Under his auspices M. Loucheur planned an International Economic Conference for the immediate consideration of a Tariff Truce. Briand himself got on with the Memorandum. It was sent to the twenty-seven interested Governments on 1st May, 1930. To the honour of the realist who conceived it, in all the history of the twentieth century there is no plan of such scope and generosity inspired by a Capitalism acting as a constructive and progressive force in human history. It overthrew all the barriers of Protection, and brought Free Trade to life again.

In the preamble, Briand stresses the need that the League

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of Nations in her own interest should create "a bond of solidarity" above all the territorial subdivisions of Europe at the earliest possible moment, so that each nation might become fully conscious of "the geographical unity of them all." Thus one of the regional agreements which the Covenant had officially recommended could be arranged on a large scale, and could provide solutions for regional difficulties, when such solutions could not be made binding on the whole world. The Memorandum states definitely: "There is no doubt that the lack of cohesion in the grouping of moral and material resources in Europe is practically the most serious obstacle to the development and efficacy of legal and political institutions. Yet it is on these institutions that a new and world-wide organization of peace must be founded. The same factor is not less serious in its effect of limiting the possibility of enlarging markets; it limits also the attempt to increase and improve industrial production; but these are the guarantees against economic crisis, which creates political instability as well as social unrest. The dangers of the existing subdivisions are increased by the new frontiers made by the Peace treaties in the interests of nationalism in Europe. These extend to 20,000 kilometres of customs lines."

Thus the first necessity was to find a formula for European co-operation within the framework of the League, and to create federal machinery which would not infringe State sovereignty, but would facilitate reorganization and economic development. The Conference would be complementary to the League of Nations; it would be opposed to no alternative ethnic grouping; it would be directed against no one; its sole

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preoccupation would be with the best possible use of the vital resources of Europe.

When in May Briand submitted to the twenty-seven Governments the plan that they had asked for, he begged them to answer before 15th July. They all did so, giving their approval. Their reservations and suggestions were interesting. On 8th September a final report, summing up the results with perfect clearness and impartiality, was submitted to them.

11th September, 1930, was a proud day for Briand. On it he presented to the Assembly at Geneva the plan which he had inspired and incorporated. At this session he made the famous declaration: "As long as I am here, there will be no war!"

III—THE FADING OF THE VISION

Briand said: "Far from cramping the activity of the League of Nations, a European Federation could only facilitate it."

But so did not think the Governments who were interested in the maintenance of the political *status quo*, which, as they saw it, depended upon the economic *status quo*. They all talked of a planned economy, but they had neither the wish nor the power to inaugurate it. As they could not do so within their own frontiers, how could they attempt it within a 'geographical unity,' an idea which they could not even understand?

They received the report from its too far-seeing author with the respectful demeanour that was proper at a first-class funeral. The birth of the 'United Europe' was registered amidst the applause of the Assembly; but the child was still-

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born. The projected Federation and its relation to the League were not living matters. They laid it gingerly in a coffin—a Commission specially made for the occasion. It was called a Commission for study, and Briand was made its sponsor, *honoris causa*.

Yet during the year, the last of Briand's life, in which he presided over the Commission, the United Europe, or rather the Commission for the study of the Memorandum, showed what it might have done. It organized two Wheat Conferences at Rome, and a 'Bank of Agriculture' at Geneva in May, 1931. This guaranteed to arable farmers the sale of the 1930 crops and prepared for the sales of 1931. Russia took part in these doings and the speeches of the Russian delegate, Litvinov, were marked by remarkably judicious economic suggestions.

The solution was ready at hand: reduction of tariffs and freer circulation of commodities. But the attempt had no success. Not for the first time selfish interests got the better of principles. Governments meekly obeyed the great producers in agriculture and industry, and the middlemen in commerce, and refused to open their frontiers.

Consumers were anxious for freedom of exchange as the only way of lowering the cost of living; men were actually starving for lack of food; but all this meant nothing to those who benefited by the old order of things. Rather than renounce their profits, they preferred to let unemployment ravage the nations and to let each country become a prison barred in by tariff walls, while in many lands the super-abundant food and industrial stocks were actually destroyed. This was the apotheosis of stupidity.

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Yet they knew just as well as Briand that world-wide freedom of exchange could save the world from poverty and starvation. They heeded it not. They themselves were not hungry, and that was enough. The crisis became more and more acute, and it created in the poorer nations a sense of grievance in addition to their political grievances, of which the victorious Governments refused to take notice. This made any real reconciliation impossible.

At the lowest estimate the plan of European federation was a great attempt at construction, and this whether the proletariat revolution makes use of it one day or not; whether world peace is made or not; whether the economic and political reorganization of Europe is ever accomplished or not. The fact remains that it was a Frenchman who had the honour of attempting it. He thus carried on the true tradition of France and bore kinship to all the generous spirits who in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries conceived a united Europe in a world where justice thrived.

IV—WHAT GENEVA WAS DOING

While these proceedings were occupying the front of the stage, the League of Nations took no part in them but that of Recording Angel. But meantime there was a considerable amount of hard work going on in the departments on the subject of what one might call questions subsidiary to the theme of Peace. We have described some of the technical organizations and consultative committees (which are as branches torn from the tree), and in particular the Economic and Financial Section, the Section of Communications and

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Transport, and the Section of Hygiene. By the continuous work of experts, and by interchange of information, they form a body of opinion, of doctrine, of common tradition, which should help to prevent a political conflict upon any of these matters. In fact, they work for a better management of this planet.

Amongst the activities of the Economic and Financial Section must be mentioned the help given to some countries whose economic struggles have been especially desperate. An outstanding example is the aid given to Austria, aid which continues up to the present time by means of international loans. The Section of Communications and Transport has an easier task than that of the Economic and Financial Section; it worked largely through the organization of numerous conferences towards the unification of law on these subjects. The Section of Hygiene tries to bring about a general improvement in public health. In the fight against epidemic disease, its influence was felt in farthest Asia and Africa. This section also attacks leprosy, tuberculosis, and the drug habit.

Thus quietly, without any advertisement, a gigantic piece of work has been done. The workers seek no personal fame, but their achievement realizes one of the lofty aims of the League of Nations. Further, we must notice the inquiries which still went on as to the fixation of new frontiers. A commission visited Upper Mesopotamia and laid down the lines of a Turco-Irak frontier, between Britain and Turkey. This was approved by The Hague Court, and the Council recommended the conclusion of a treaty between Great Britain and Irak. This led to the result that in 1932 the new protected

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kingdom, together with the Hedjaz, joined the League, and increased the number of votes controlled by Britain.

With the services of the League of Nations must be mentioned the whole machinery and administration of the International Labour Office, working away indefatigably in the magnificent building gifted to it by Albert Thomas. It has decided many legal questions between employers' delegates and those of Labour. But it meets with constant difficulties from the Government representatives in the course of its slow discussions, which are often acrimonious. Although the problem of the forty-hour week has been under discussion for years, and has been decided in principle in the affirmative, nothing practical has yet been done.

We must not omit to mention the foundation of several international institutes or bureaux for the unification of private law, educational films, intellectual co-operation, relief, and repatriation of destitute aliens, the Prince of Monaco's hydrographical work, &c.

Such a mass of work needs, of course, many officials to cope with it, and a large body of workers has grown up. There are posts for directors, assistant directors, technical advisers, editors, secretaries, typists; and all these people must be paid. The money is found by the member-States, in proportion to their power and their wealth; some of the Great Powers pay for some of the small ones.

Thus the subscription of Albania and San Domingo forms a unit, which is multiplied by 12 for Denmark, by 40 for Spain, by 60 for Italy and Japan, by 79 for France and Germany, and by 105 for Great Britain. From 10 million gold francs in 1920, the Budget of the League mounted to 25

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million in 1923, and to 28 million in 1930 (140 paper francs). The annual average since that date is 150 millions.

This is also the cost of the magnificent palace which is now being built on the slopes of the Park of the Ariana. The League has long outgrown the size of the former international Hotel on the Quai Wilson. This new Temple of Peace was to have been inaugurated early in 1935. Let us hope that it will have better luck than the first Peace Palace at The Hague which lost its job through the outbreak of war. The judges of the Supreme Court use it to-day.

V—PENELOPE'S WEB

When one considers these large expenses, one wonders whether the authorities at Geneva justify their existence, considering that their work is scattered over so wide a field, and is often done in vain. In relation to the attempt which I have just described, I should refer to the time wasted since 1924 in work preparatory to the Disarmament Conference. The reader will remember Herriot's Protocol. Its system of security was based on mutual assistance and solidarity between the Powers; it had foreshadowed limitations and reduction of armaments, and the Council was to study this question during the next three months.

The Conference was to open on 15th June, 1925, and all States, whether members or not, were invited. Owing to Britain's evasions, the preparatory Commission was not constituted until December. It was composed of States which were members of the Council, and also of States whose geographical position gave them a special interest in the question.

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For this reason Turkey and the U.S.S.R., which were not yet members, were invited, as well as the United States.

There was an incident which was ominous for the future. In 1925 one of the five permanent departments of the Secretariat, that of Disarmament which had been pondering distractedly upon the insoluble problem ever since the League began, had set about an examination of international control of the trade in arms, munitions, and machines of war. A Conference attended by forty-four States had opened at Geneva and sat from 14th May to 17th June, 1926.

A Cuban delegate protested against the fact that "friendly countries had made mutual attacks, rendered possible by facilities afforded by the Government for the manufacture and private trade in arms." Whereupon the American delegate defended the private manufacturers, "many of whom have the most peaceable intentions." What hope was there then "for those who love peace," if government manufacture is to go on without any restriction, even if private manufacture is forbidden?

But neither of these gentlemen need have disturbed themselves. The small countries which did not manufacture arms were opposed to control, and all that the Conference did was to confirm some restrictions of old date. None of the Great Powers wished to give up the traffic in arms on which they drew for their national defence. The Government delegations were sped on their way by this significant signal, and they were watched at every step by the armament magnates.

In May and September, 1926, in March-April and November-December, 1927, in March, 1928, in April-May, 1929, and in November-December, 1930, the preparatory

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Commission held seven meetings. At the seventh in November-December, 1930, they were no further advanced than at the first session.

On none of the points was there any agreement. Did limitation of armaments mean peace-time establishments or war-time establishments? Were armaments to be limited by one category at a time, or was there such interdependence between the different categories that only a general limitation was possible? How was the budget limitation to be brought about? And how was the control of the future Convention to be made real?

There was an homeric *mêlée*. There was endless juggling with war material and effectives. The two most arresting plans were produced by two of the best minds in Britain and France—Lord Robert Cecil and J. Paul-Boncour, both of whom had vowed an unshakeable faith to the League and its effectiveness.

The first, like a true Englishman, was most anxious about the naval communications and the naval supremacy of the British Empire, and was more zealous for the limitation of the military, naval, and air forces of the Continental Powers than for the cutting down of the British navy. M. Paul-Boncour was a republican of an extreme type, and his main concern was to prevent any weakening of the French national defence forces. There was a third plan, the Italian plan, which naturally aimed at the best possible disposition in the Mediterranean (*Mare Nostrum*) for the Italian warships of the tonnage allowed by the Washington Conference.

The session of 1927 had shown clearly the impossibility of any agreement. Neither the French nor the British plans

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offered a favourable basis for discussion, nor was there much hope of modification of the Washington agreements by America, Britain, and Japan. It came out later that the failure of this latter scheme was largely due to the secret intrigues and corrupt manœuvres of an American adventurer to whom three great New York corporations had promised 250,000 dollars if he could bring this failure about. His contract of service was to cover ten years.

There was one simple, practical and logical proposal, which would have finally settled the question of disarmament on sea, land, and in the air. It had been made in this very year 1927 by the Soviet delegate, M. Litvinov. It was a programme of wholesale disarmament. It fell upon the conference like a bomb. It smothered everyone with peace. Perhaps one day when humanity has been taught by bitterest sufferings, it will come back to this programme. At the moment it was carefully side-tracked. There were doubts as to the sincerity of Russia's intentions. Members suspected that it was a move by the Revolutionaries to break up the military strength of other Governments, without giving up a man or a gun of the Red armies.

The proposal was rejected on this ground: "The Russian proposal does not accord with the plans already laid." The hypocrisy of this is apparent. In 1928 Litvinov committed his second offence; he proposed progressive reduction of armaments. He failed again. This time the pretext was: "There are technical difficulties, and no connexion is made between security and disarmament. The formulæ used have long ago been ruled out by the League, and the ground covered encroaches upon the work of the future Conference." As in

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the time of Brid'oison, the gentry at Geneva took refuge in respect for 'foorme.'

The German delegation acted under a permanent dread of some repetition of the Ruhr episode. It had put forward a demand that in the event of the outbreak of hostilities (and subject to further arrangements) the Council should be charged with the immediate proclamation of an armistice with the withdrawal of such forces as had entered enemy territory. This proposal was burked. So was the Chinese idea, put forward by General Tsiang-Tsa-Ping, of the total abolition of compulsory military service, "which," as he said not without humour, "solved the problem of the reduction of effectives."

The upshot was that Penelope's web, woven by day and unravelled by night, remained exactly as it was. Every one talked of disarmament, but no one meant to budge by one hand's breadth from his position.

So the talking shop was hard at work, while chemical factories were adapted for the production of poison gas, and military and civil aeroplanes were used for gas bombardment, and while the all-important international armament trade and the private manufacture of munitions of war went on as before.

This last was the plague spot. It was there that the caustic was wanted. The merchants of Death saw no reason to give up their profits. Let Europe and the whole world perish, but never shut down the armament factories!

There was one curious little point in this connexion. The Convention of 1926 had allowed this prosperous business free rein in Europe, but it had endorsed the ban against it in certain forbidden zones in Asia and Africa. This was because

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the Great Powers did not care to see their Colonies arming freely.

We complete our picture of the preliminaries to the ever-receding Disarmament Conference by observing that a 'Committee of Security and Arbitration' was also at work. But it reached no conclusion either. It could not reach agreement upon one plan, and so it issued three: a collective treaty concerning non-aggression; the peaceable settlement of disputes; a bilateral treaty of the same type as the above mentioned. "Anyone can see that here is want in the midst of plenty," said Lucien de Foyer. He was one of the keenest observers and the truest friends of the League of Nations. He has succeeded the late Charles Richet as President of the International Peace Bureau. When so many plans are put forward, there is no real choice; people choose 'the alibi of Buridan's ass.' In 1929 Litvinov pointed out that all the results were negative and demanded the immediate summons of the Conference. Governments must take up their responsibilities and publicly follow the lead "of the desires and demands of the nations."

Only in the session of 1930 did their representatives realize that their procrastination was becoming ridiculous. Then on Italy's initiative they decided to plan an Armaments Truce pending the meeting of the Conference. The plan was adopted on 29th September, 1931. The Assembly recommended it to all the nations invited to the Conference, "as it would create an atmosphere of confidence." They all agreed to it. Could they possibly have discussed limiting their armaments while they were actually increasing them? The Truce was promulgated on the 1st November and was to last for a

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year. At the same time the 1st February, 1932, was fixed upon for the opening of the public debates which could not decently be postponed again.

VI—FROM THE HOOVER MORATORIUM TO THE GUNS OF SHANGHAI

In 1930 and 1931 there were still occasions that were glorious for the League. There were moments when one could persuade oneself that European relations had begun to go well. Briand, nearly at the end of his work as President of the Council of the League, or simply as the recognized exponent of Peace, had lost none of his prestige, in spite of the cold reception of the Memorandum.

He was still the great persuasive arbitrator who had made the Græco-Bulgarian settlement, and had ended the recent Bolivian dispute with Paraguay in distant South America. Since 1928 these two countries, both League members, had been fighting an interminable war, known as a 'dispute' in the euphemistic vocabulary of Geneva. But Briand's intervention had persuaded them to lay down their arms—for the time.

There had been another diplomatic success. Germany and Poland had registered an agreement relative to the German minorities in Upper Silesia. The four most important foreign ministers, Briand, Curtius, Henderson, and Grandi, had openly proclaimed their intention never to have recourse to war to settle their quarrels, but always to submit them to the Council at Geneva. The Pact of Paris was still recent.

In the sphere of economic peace, Belgium, Denmark,

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Holland, and Sweden had concluded a tariff truce at the end of 1930. This was a happy application of the principle of the 'federal bond.' At the same time the French and German steel magnates formed the Steel Cartel. This was a much less beneficent federation!

There was yet another victory for Geneva. Austria, being short of foodstuffs, had once again turned to Berlin. Chancellor Brüning, seeing the tide of National Socialism rising to a tidal wave, bethought him of a counterstroke, namely, economic reunion with Austria. The German Foreign Minister Curtius and the Austrian Chancellor Schönerer let their project become known. The news burst like a bomb upon the former Allies.

Briand was thrown out of his stride. In Paris he growled and at Geneva he raged. He got the League to bring the matter before The Hague Tribunal on 15th September, 1931. It caused much alarm there. There were long-drawn haggings. Finally, France won her case by a majority of one. San Salvador, Cuba, and Columbia voted on her side, and this gained the day. It is to be noted that among the seven minority voters who were in favour of the Anschluss were Britain, France's friend, and Belgium, France's ally! Under the pressure of the French delegation Germany and Austria had to give way. It was a victory for the policy of violence. France continued her loans to Vienna, thus maintaining her 'independence,' or rather her slavery.

Meantime there was equal alarm upon a subject which did not concern the League, although it touched the international interests of the Great Powers.

On 20th June, 1931, Hindenburg sent an SOS to the

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President of the United States. He said that the Reich was in a desperate position. If Germany continued to pay the arrears of the Young Plan, by the 1st July next she would be unable to pay her officials, police, military, and unemployed. It was the end. At once Hoover proposed an immediate moratorium to the European Powers.

Britain and Italy agreed. France hung back, largely because New York made it clear that reparations were an entirely European question, and that the debt of 9,455,014,125 dollars to America had nothing to do with reparations. After intricate discussions France accepted a solution which did not abolish reparations although it lightened Germany's burden. The Reich was to pay the unconditional annuity. Guarantees were taken through the agency of the Bank of International Settlements at Basle. The *Peau de Chagrin* had shrunk for the third time.

Briand was worn out, a dying man. These last months of 1931 were for him a St. Martin's Summer. For Geneva, too, they were the beginning of the bad times. At the end of September Japan invaded China without regard to law.

Japan had annexed Formosa; she had annexed Korea; since the Treaty of Portsmouth she had controlled Southern Manchuria; now she set out on a career of conquest in this new domain. A tragedy, which is still being played out, had begun. The Government of Nankin turned to the Council of the League, putting all its trust in the League for the protection of the 'peace of nations.'

To Briand fell the honour of presiding at the examination of the dispute, or rather of the 'war or conflict.' It was his last act as foreign minister in the first Laval Ministry. He

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requested both parties to do everything possible to restore normal relations. Both parties answered that they did not intend to resort to war to enforce their claims. This promise was broken. From far away Shanghai came the sound of gunfire. In his sickroom the dying man listened to it, and the last months of his life were harassed by an ever-increasing anxiety. It was a long way from the Quai d'Orsay where for thirteen years he had embodied the French genius in its essence.

With him ended the good times of the League of Nations. From this time the League slipped down the fatal slope; on one side was the Scylla of the wars between China and Japan, and Bolivia and Paraguay; on the other the Charybdis of the farcical Disarmament Conference, which was a piece of humbug manufactured by the capitalists for the consumption of the bewildered nations.

PART III

THE BANKRUPTCY OF DISARMAMENT

“Take away the army and you take away war.”

—VICTOR HUGO.

CHAPTER I

THE BEWILDERMENT OF THE NATIONS

I—THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

THE preamble to the fifth part of the Treaty of Versailles laid down: "In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval, and air clauses which follow."

Before the Army Commission Marshal Foch bore witness: "I declare that on 31st January, 1927, Germany was effectively disarmed." Thus he endorsed the effectiveness of the destruction made under the control of the Army Commission beyond all doubt. His evidence cannot be gainsaid. Such were the actual terms of the treaties and the declarations which bound the organizers and members of the League of Nations formally and absolutely, to disarm themselves after they had disarmed Germany. Article 8 of the Covenant ran: "The members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety . . . The Council . . . shall formulate plans for such reduction . . ."

On 30th May, 1919, at the Peace Conference, the following communication was made to the German plenipotentiaries: "The allied and associated Powers declare that their conditions as to German armaments are not solely intended to

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incapacitate Germany from a renewal of her policy of military aggression. They also constitute the first step towards the reduction and general limitation of armaments, which they desire to accomplish, as being one of the most effective preventives of war, and one of the first tasks which the League of Nations must strive to perform."

Finally, here is the last Protocol of the Treaty of Locarno. The signatory Powers, including Germany, declare plainly that they "have the firm conviction that the entry into force of these treaties and conventions . . . while strengthening peace and security in Europe, will hasten on effectively the disarmament provided for in Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations."

I borrow from an important book by an English historian, *The Problem of the Twentieth Century*, by David Davies (now Lord Davies), a severe judgment, which the later course of history confirms: "These pledges remain unfulfilled. The Allied and associated Powers still retain their gigantic fleets and their huge armies. Hitherto they have treated these undertakings as scraps of paper. Interminable discussions, extending over the last ten years, have taken place at Geneva and elsewhere, but they have produced no general scheme of disarmament. Germany is entitled to ask why these promises have not been honoured. She has carried out her obligations under Part V on the strength of these declarations, but the Allied and associated nations which waged the war against militarism, now find themselves held in its remorseless grip."

The fears expressed here were perfectly justified, from the very moment that the Conference opened. Germany had

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made the best possible use of the hard conditions which she had to observe. She had passed a certain number of short-term service men through the framework of the Reichswehr, she perfected her 'schupos' (police), and she modernized her military equipment such as it was. But she was obviously helpless before the Powers gathered at Geneva. Her old irreconcilable enemies in France had once had right on their side, but now the boot was on the other foot, and the same right was on the side of Germany.

Great Britain, America, and Italy recognized this fact, more or less. The U.S.S.R. was closer to the Weimar Republic than to the French Republic; Hitler and his anti-Marxism were not yet in power. Japan was now completely occupied by her war with China. The other nations, great and small, limited their ideas to their immediate interests, which they confused with a desire for peace. Poland was still allied to France, and she and the Little Entente worked in concert with France, who was still busily providing them with money and arms. Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria, the other powers who had been disarmed, naturally sided with Berlin. The neutral countries were guided in their partisanship of the one side or the other by their personal interests. Germany's principle was the same as she had expounded at every possible opportunity during the last thirteen years through her Chancellor and her two Presidents; recognition of the equality of rights. Yet she did not carry her pretensions very high. As for France, she still adhered rigidly to the policy of the *status quo*.

Geneva had given up the aspect of a tribunal for conciliation. It had become a duelling ground, and the swords were unsheathed. The polite mask of diplomacy scarcely hid the

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agitation of the faces underneath. The voices were discordant and harsh and the authoritative ones came from Governments which were themselves governed by sordid invisible powers—Fear, which based security on the maintenance and increase of armaments, and the international armament industry, which worked in the shadows against disarmament.

Against the old Hotel on the Quai Wilson, an annexe had been built along the edge of the lake, to house the interminable meetings. The old-fashioned palatial style of the Hotel contrasted with the new concrete building, with its large glazed bays, its public meeting halls, and its press rooms, like the Galerie des Pas Perdus, with its 'modern' chromium-plated chairs and tables, with its waiters running about with drinks, as if it were a bar or a saloon, with its large telegraph and telephone room.

This building was the home of more or less reliable information, of news and its interpretation, of all sorts of tittle-tattle which the special correspondents who were accredited to the League sent out to the four corners of the earth, although the delegations on whom they relied were all biased. The correspondents were for the most part tainted by the same political feeling and the same speculations that made so many important newspapers into public poisoners.

The whole world waited in suspense outside this hive which contained more drones than workers. People do not know of the jobbery perpetrated every day by their masters, and so every nation looked to Geneva in constant expectation of 'the Judge of Peace, who shall speak Justice.' They hoped that at last the crushing burden of ever-increasing military budgets would be reduced.

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At the time when the Conference began, these budgets amounted to nearly 150 milliard francs, all of which was so much lost for social services; it was a colossal premium paid not for insurance against danger but actually for increase of danger to security. France alone paid nearly 19 milliard francs in 1931. Thus 48 per cent. of her budget vanished into the abyss of war loans and war debts, and 30.5 per cent. was allocated to armaments.

Only about 20 per cent. remained for current expenses and social services. All the war-belligerents were groaning under similar destructive burdens. They were all paralysed in the same way, and the world crisis increased the completeness of the paralysis. Was the load now at last to be lifted?

The inaugural meeting of these solemn sessions took place on the 2nd February. The President was Arthur Henderson, a Labour Party man, who was absolutely single-hearted and devoted. It must have pleased him that for the first time in the world's history, out of sixty-five invitations sent by the League, sixty-one had been accepted by member-States and non-members alike. He said: "This is the greatest, most general effort that has ever been made to achieve disarmament for all States and all categories of armaments." The preparatory work had all been done by a few Powers only and had been limited to a few categories of arms.

The increase in the number of those present and the extension of the programme might conceivably have led to improvement in the results. But it was useless to submit questions to a greater number of examiners when the deciding voices were still those who never could or would agree. The smaller States had all committed themselves beforehand to one or

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other of the great Powers; they formed groups of supers supporting the leading players.

I was present at the early meetings. I recall that of 3rd February. The French Plan was expounded by André Tardieu. It was rushed into the field thus early, so as to influence the Conference from the start; its tone was very peremptory. I was present also on 4th February at the hearing of the national representatives. The delegates sat unresponsive and almost impatient; they looked on resignedly while the representatives of world-wide hope and belief filed past, and you could almost hear the undertone of scorn in the 'Bravos' given because politeness demanded them.

The President had begun by reading innumerable petitions. He enumerated the principal ones: from the International Co-operative Alliance (70 million families in forty countries); from the Eastern Council of the Œcumenical Conference (50 million persons); from the Commission Syndicale of Belgium (555,000 workers); from the Confédération Générale Intellectuelle de France (190,000); from men and women in Japan, in spite of the Chinese War (193,000); from the people of Holland, 2,500,000 signatures.

Finally, the united petition of the Churches of France, Great Britain, Italy, the United States, South America; and from workers associations in every part of the world—all these demanded a policy of wholesale disarmament.

The recollection of all this heartfelt good will is painful. I remember the petitioners who came from fifteen great women's organizations. Each one brought as her offering the lists of signatures of millions of mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters—eight millions in all. I remember the spokesman

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of 20 million students, who said that "work for the reduction of armaments, and for the disarmament of men's minds, was work for the ideal for which so many brave men had died upon battlefields without number. But for whatever country they fought, they had all believed that they died for the war to end war."

A young American speaking in the name of the thousands of students of seventy American and twenty-nine British universities declared: "It will be my generation that will be asked to destroy all that is best in human culture, and perhaps even civilization itself, for the sake of causes which future historians will discover to have been mistaken, or rather false and stupid! We do not intend to prepare ourselves for cannon fodder. I venture to say that, in a sense, I present an ultimatum rather than a petition. We intend to live and to live in peace."

One after another there came urgent, moving appeals from the peoples' delegates. They were coldly listened to by the Government delegations. Vandervelde's rough voice gave utterance to the warning of 25 million trade unionists, backed up by workers in America, India, and the Far East. It was an order "dictated to the higher Powers by the lower Powers." Jouhaut, the representative of the C.G.T., denounced armament factories, "the cancer of the modern world."

Where are all these voices now? Where are the impulses that moved them? The Gods of war do not hear the voices of living men!

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II—THE GENERAL COMMITTEE—FROM THE TARDIEU PLAN TO THE HOOVER PLAN AND THE BENES REPORT—THE FIRST ADJOURNMENT

Then and there the set pieces began. They lasted for a fortnight. Foreign ministers, prime ministers, and diplomats read governmental—I nearly said electoral—programmes; they all protested their good faith, and they all gravely explained their contradicting views.

André Tardieu was explicit, John Simon was unctuous, Bruning was ascetic, Gibson faintly American, the Italian Grandi subtle, Litvinov caustically frank—one after another they mounted the tribune and were followed by gentry of less importance. It was truly a show-off of official eloquence for reproduction all over the world. At the conclusion the leaders folded up their speeches and the real tragi-comedy began. From a great distance came the sound of the gunfire of the war between China and Japan. But in the sound-proof rooms in Geneva it was reduced to such a mere echo that the 'conflict' excited no one. A little later the same thing happened in the case of the Bolivo-Paraguayan war. The killed and wounded might as well have been on another planet. Meantime the Council, then under the presidency of the permanent French delegate, multiplied its public and private sittings and made no decisions of any kind.

Paul-Boncour said to me sadly: "I am grinding out procedure." He could do nothing in the face of the determination of the Great Powers not to intervene. They were more anxious to sell arms and munitions to the belligerents than to take action in a dispute which did not directly concern them. After all, the Far East is a long way off!

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At the end of February the delegations of the Conference left the great Hall of the Electoral Building. Some of them were only to return several weeks later when the Plenary Assembly of the League of Nations at last made a move under pressure from the smaller Powers, who found it easier to make up their minds because they had less responsibility to bear.

Attention should be drawn here to the existence of these two trends, which eventually became very important. There were two sets of weights and two measures and this ruined the judgment of Geneva. This defect arose from the circumstances and certainly not from the principle of the League of Nations.

However, the public discussions had to be faced some time. Those present were allowed to applaud the star turns, but they were forbidden to demonstrate when 'the Bolshevik' was speaking. The Conference nominated the General Committee, which sat in the new annexe on the Quai Wilson until its work reached its ironic end.

Arthur Henderson was chairman of the interminable meetings and an admirably impartial one. The Greek Politis was vice-president. The *rapporteur* was M. Benes, bosom friend of the President of the Czechoslovakian Republic and even more attached than he to the cause of the Allies, who had restored Bohemia. The General Committee had appointed five sub-committees on which all the delegations were represented; the Political Sub-Committee, the Sub-Committees for Land, Sea, and Air Forces, and the Sub-Committee for Expenditure on National Defence. These bodies were to sift the plans of the different Governments and, if possible, to bring together some one scheme out of the hotch-potch.

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It was clear from the start that this was an attempt to square the circle. The first thing done, no one dissenting, was to get rid of the new plan for general disarmament which Litvinov had lodged with the General Committee on 25th February. The U.S.S.R. had stuck to its guns on the principle that to get a little you must ask for a lot. The plan was inspired by "the wish to create security for all States and all nations, by preventing future possible wars." This was too much. The project went straight to its proper place, the waste-paper basket.

The preamble of the Soviet document had referred to the abandonment by the States of war as an instrument of national policy, and passed on to the existence of armaments and their tendency to increase, which would lead inevitably to unbearable taxation of peaceable people, and, finally, to their enlistment for new wars. But only the conclusion was listened to: the demand for the immediate and complete abolition of all armed forces on a basis of equality for all.

The U.S.S.R. made light of it. The Committee passed at once to the study of a more serious or serious-seeming scheme, the Tardieu Plan. Its characteristic feature was the linking of national disarmament with the arming of the League of Nations: Its principal proposals were:

(1) The creation of an international army, under the sole command of the League as a sort of auxiliary police, to assist any State which was the victim of aggression; it was to be made up of contingents from each of the member-States.

(2) This army was to be armed with the most deadly and perfect weapons; long range heavy artillery, naval guns over 203 mms., airships capable of carrying large crews and making long-distance flights, &c. National forces were to be limited to inferior material and lesser

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tonnage. Civil aviation was to be internationalized, and only aeroplanes incapable of conversion for war were to be constructed. Their types and sizes were to be limited to a maximum to be fixed. The construction and use of the more important airships should be subject to continental, intercontinental, and intercolonial organizations controlled by the League, which would hold the right of requisition.

(3) New rules were proposed for the protection of civil populations: the prohibition of the use of poison gas either in the way of bombs dropped from the air or of artillery bombardment; the same prohibition applied to bacterial poisoning or incendiary matter; prohibition of bombardment beyond a certain distance from the battle front; similar prohibitions for coastal bombardment, &c.

This was a fine extensive scheme and would surely beguile anyone who was content with a satisfactory theory. This one was only a theory and purely formal at that. Moreover, it had been rejected at the very beginning of League history, and now, after twelve years of political rivalry and fundamental weakness, it was quite impossible to apply it, though at the moment China and Japan were actually cutting one another's throats. The Tardieu Plan was nothing but a game to amuse the company.

That all this is true becomes clear on consideration of the conditions of working of the French plan, viz.: compulsory arbitration and the definition of the aggressor; firm guarantees of rapid action by the Power which has the command of the forces; the conformity of this action with the rules of a body of international law which as yet was still vague, although the treaties and the pacts fixed the contractual element in the relation between nations; international control of the armament position.

The head of the French delegation knew perfectly well that these conditions would not be realized for a long time;

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experience had shown that discussion of a single one of the points raised might last for months or years. The Tardieu Plan led nowhere. It was one of those feats of *légerdemain* that always succeeded to admiration at a disarmament discussion.

Meanwhile secret conversations were going on behind the scenes between German and French delegations. They discussed a military agreement proposed by the Reich (a five years' agreement for the terms and numbers of men and armaments). But the conversations broke down on two points. M. Tardieu admitted the possibility of agreement with Berlin, but only *if the essential points of the Peace treaties were respected*. They must reappear in a fresh treaty which Germany would sign on the same footing as all the other members of the Conference. A scale of proportional limitation would be fixed for all alike. Germany was also asked to make a pact of mutual assistance.

The Reich parried by demanding equality of rights.

Tardieu lost his seat at the elections of 1932 and his plan was buried with him. The General Committee set to work on another, tougher morsel. It was too tough in fact for Tweedledum and Tweedledee. It was the Hoover Plan, lodged with the Conference on 25th June. It was a clear, simple proposal, based on these principles: the reduction of means of attack and the increase of means of defence, for which alone military forces were to be used; the interdependence of land, sea, and air forces; reduction by a third of all armaments. As to land forces, the plan involved the abolition of tanks, chemical warfare, and mechanical heavy artillery; as to air forces "all bombers were to be abolished,

THE HOOVER PLAN

and all bombardment from the air totally prohibited." With regard to naval forces America proposed that the tonnage of ships of the line, and of submarines (never to be more than 35,000 tons for any country) should be reduced by a third and that of aeroplane carriers, cruisers, and torpedo destroyers should be reduced by a quarter only. A month later the American Plan followed the French Plan into limbo, but in this case the floral tributes were numerous and touching.

The Franco-German conversations were ended by the closure moved by the Conference, thus ending the labours of the first phase. Britain and America rejected the proposals of mutual assistance included in the Tardieu Plan; they involved the creation of an international force. Thus Germany and France went off in opposite directions. For the second time the United States retreated to their own continent, and for the third time Britain gave the others the slip, as she had done once before in the time of Clemenceau, and again in 1925 when she refused to sign the Herriot Protocol. Much time was to pass before London deigned to talk of collective security; she did not do so until after the large-scale rearmament of the Third Reich and the development of the Anglo-Italian conflict over Abyssinia.

Having gone through twenty-five exhausting weeks of sterile discussions, the General Committee adjourned until the autumn on 23rd July, 1932, after the first hearing of the Benes report. This was an evasively worded document, full of resolutions like this one: "A substantial reduction of the armaments of all nations will be effected, and this reduction should be applied in its entirety to land, sea, and air armaments by a General Convention"; or like this one: "The

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essential aim is to reduce the means of aggression." This truth is a little too obvious.

How and when is agreement to be reached on the final convention? M. Benes was wisely silent on these points. On the other hand, attacks on civil populations were forbidden. Theoretically, of course! With the same firmness aerial bombardment was abolished without a suggestion how this was to be done. Again, still in the future, building of aeroplanes was to be limited and civil aviation made subject to a complete control and publicity.

As to land forces, the only question raised was the limitation in numbers and size. No mention was made of heavy artillery or tanks and nothing at all was said about naval disarmament.

As to the prohibition of chemical, bacteriological, and incendiary methods of warfare, at the time when Japanese aeroplanes were spreading panic in China, it was a joke and nothing else. It was unconsciously improved upon by Tardieu's successor, M. Herriot, when he declared that such a measure would only be effective when it was applied not only to the use but also to all preparations for the use of such barbarous methods of war. In other words—when all chemical works were ordered to close down immediately, as no discrimination is possible between production in times of peace and production for war purposes. What is the good of talking of material disarmament unless it is preceded by disarmament of the minds of men?

The fiasco was so complete and the humbug so obvious, that although forty-one States swallowed the official declaration of failure, there were twelve which refused to associate

THE BENES REPORT

themselves with it. Two-thirds of the delegations composed the majority, but only one-third were really convinced, and these were the States who had gained by the treaties. The other consenting third kept step with them without any real conviction. The remaining third were the opposition who definitely opposed further delays. Only two Powers—Germany and Russia—gave a formal negative on the Benes Report. But eight others—Italy, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Turkey, China, Albania, and Afghanistan—abstained from voting, and their abstention spoke eloquently for them.

Thus once more the Powers stood in two groups, those who were defeated in 1919 against those who were victorious, joined by their clientèle of small States and by the neutral countries. The system of alliances with all its attendant dangers was already in sight, as the League had failed to accomplish its mission.

Before the voting took place, two definite declarations had been made by the German and Italian delegations. The German Ambassador Nadolny gave warning in the name of the Reich that she would not reappear at the Conference in October unless the methods of the Conference were changed and the just rights of Berlin were recognized. The Italian General Balbo broke for the first time with the tradition that all the speeches at Geneva should be in French or English, and uttered his warning in the proud Roman tongue. He declared that the results were so far insufficient and that in future the work must be tackled in another manner.

The most devastating criticism upon the works of this first phase was given by the U.S.S.R., through the smiling, mocking lips of Litvinov. Russia was still friendly to

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Germany. He declared: "The Benes Report only contains two matters. First, decisions which are subordinated to certain conditions, and these are themselves the subjects of violent controversy. Secondly, general indications of agreements reached. But we all know by experience how often we differ as to what it is exactly we have agreed upon. Disarmament must no longer be tossed from one committee or sub-committee to another, from one conference to another, from one session to another, like a tennis ball. Six months will make no difference in the answers which the Governments give, and there is no reason for all the delay in asking for them. The resolution before us is not an answer, it merely veils the answer. It is for this reason that we should reject the resolution in its present form."

The first act of the play ('Much Ado about Nothing') was over. The real drama was still going on behind the scenes. It was arranged by the armament interests.

III—FROM THE PAUL-BONCOUR PLAN AND THE MACDONALD PLAN TO THE SECOND ADJOURNMENT

When the summer was over and the curtain rose again, the actors were once more marking time. The General Committee was still on the horns of the same dilemma and the sub-committees had discovered no new factor making for agreement. In these circumstances on 14th November, 1932, a second French plan was considered. It had been drawn up by the Minister for War in the Herriot Ministry, Paul-Boncour.

This plan had borrowed its central idea from the Hoover Plan. This was the increase of defensive forces and the reduc-

THE PAUL-BONCOUR PLAN

tion of forces for aggression. Its main object was to link the two subjects of disarmament and security. A British guarantee to France in case of aggression against her, had proved quite impossible to obtain, and so the Quai d'Orsay now aimed at a contingent guarantee from the United States. The French idea really emanated from the Minister, a man of advanced views; several of his colleagues and the headquarters staff in the person of the Commander-in-Chief, General Weygand, had not supported the presentation of the plan. It met at once with the same obstructionist spirit which had paralysed all action since the opening of the Conference; underhand resistance from the munition makers, for whom all restriction was criminal, and open resistance from the German delegation, who were dissatisfied with the disproportion between the proposed armaments for Germany and for France.

For France was mindful of the dissolution of the Reichswehr and the re-establishment of conscription. She wanted to set up a long period of probation for Germany, during which Germany was to be forbidden the use of certain types of arms and subjected to an automatic control, while France gave up none of her own.

The details of the plan were as follows: "Aggressive forces were to include long-service armies whether professional or not, and, in war material, the most mobile and the most powerful items. The principal suggestions were:

(1) Any violation of the Pact of Paris would automatically involve the rupture of all economic and financial relations with the aggressor, and all nations would declare against the recognition of any *fait accompli* proceeding from a violation of international engagements.

(2) In order to decrease the offensive character of national forces, the

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land forces of the Continental States of Europe should be conformed to one common type, a short-service army of limited size. The actual number of effectives should be decided, as by Article 8 of the Pact, in relation to the particular circumstances of each State, and in particular of the variation in the recruiting strength of the signatory powers.

(3) No national army might be armed with any heavy mechanical weapons, and in particular should have none capable of attacking permanent fortifications. On the other hand, each nation should keep, on a permanent footing and at the service of the League for the purpose of common action, a limited number of specialized units of long-service men with the heaviest equipment. Also each State should keep stocks of the war materials for land fighting such as was forbidden to the national armies. These stocks should be under international control. In case of need, they should be loaned to any one of the contracting parties, on whose behalf collective action might be taken.

Thus the Paul-Boncour Plan resembled the Tardieu Plan as well as that of Hoover, in so far as it contemplated national contingents belonging to the super-State existing within the framework of each continental military establishment. These contingents would not be an international super-army, which was an impossibility, but reserves organized for it. The whole conception depended upon an unrealized premise, that Europe was in a state of political agreement and that 'aggression' had been satisfactorily defined.

The time was not yet ripe for this. In 1935, after Russia had given a definite interpretation, and after Britain's interests had come into play, the elusive word was captured and pinned down. But at the time we have reached, with the Manchukuo war going on in Asia, and the Chaco war in America, the League of Nations was still not interested in making words fit facts.

A month after the deposition of the Paul-Boncour Plan an

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important declaration of principle was made by Great Britain, Italy and, rather surprisingly, France. They laid down unanimously that "one of the principles which should guide the Conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments should be the grant to Germany and to the other Powers disarmed by the treaties of equality of rights, in a settlement which would give security to all nations; and that this principle should be embodied in the convention which will comprise the conclusions of the Conference for the reduction and the limitation of armaments.

While the Conference was deliberating at Geneva, a Conference had been held at Lausanne between the German Chancellor von Papen and the three Premiers of Great Britain, France, and Italy. After the Hoover moratorium Germany became really insolvent. She obstinately refused to begin the new series of payments under the Young Plan. Sixty-seven milliard francs—the official German figure—had been extracted from the defeated nations. It was clear that no more would be forthcoming. The debates were bitter and unpleasant; they were complicated by the fact that the United States insisted on treating the question of debt with that of disarmament. For she regarded this as the first condition to be fulfilled before any reduction of the debts of the victors to American banks in 1914-18.

Hence under pressure from Britain and Italy, backed up by the United States, a final settlement of German reparations had been accepted amounting to perhaps some millions of marks as a token payment. Then there would be an end of them. But France would not concede to her former foe the abolition of the humiliating and deceptive Article 231, in other

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words, recognition of political and military equality. Hence she had to fall back on the vague formula of a juristic, but not an effective, examination of the equality of rights. This did not really bind her to anything much as long as the question of her security was not settled, bound up as this question was with a disarmament which the French Headquarters Staff did not intend to make.

When the second French Plan was hung up, Britain intervened in her turn. Early in 1933 Mr. MacDonald, in the name of his Government, lodged a scheme which, he said, was intended to harmonize divergent aims and interests. It was a half-way house, aiming at international control first, before coming to the question of reductions. The British Plan was as follows:—

First, it adopted the French point of view as to Continental armies. They were to be uniform in type, on the basis of short-term service and reduced size, under the permanent control of the International Disarmament Commission.

Secondly, the programme of disarmament, taken as a whole, must aim at a substantial reduction in the long run, for all heavily armed States, and the application of the principle of equality, within the framework of a system of security.

Thirdly, as a pendant to the abolition of certain types of arms, or the ultimate prohibition of their use, an agreed list of arms permitted to all countries should be drawn up.

At the same time it was specifically laid down that the States whose armaments had been reduced by the Peace treaties should not immediately begin to rearm. This was a sop to France, which was growing anxious over the secret rearmament of Germany. Germany saw no prospect of improvement

THE MACDONALD PLAN

in her position, and since von Papen had succeeded Brüning, she had acted on her own initiative. Hindenburg was alarmed by the continual increase of Hitler's party, and this card was the last but one he held in his hand.

Lastly, as to aviation, the British Plan proposed the complete abolition of naval and military aircraft and the control of civil aviation to prevent its use for strategic ends. The only point on which the MacDonald Plan said next to nothing was the most important of all in British eyes: Navies. Britain, like America, did not want any reduction of her own naval power.

After several days of discussion the General Committee decided to take this plan as the basis of future discussion. It reserved to the delegations the right to move modifications, amendments, or complementary resolutions (27th March, 1933). They made full use of this right.

On 8th June following, this decision was confirmed: the British plan was to be the basis of the future convention. But this did not mean that perfect harmony reigned. As a matter of fact, hardly any clause escaped without objections from some interested power. Germany, Austria, and Hungary, who had protested in the previous year against the adoption of the conclusions of the Benes Report, at the end of the first phase, now protested against the mention made of it here. Italy and Russia joined in. France demanded the international organization of civil aviation under the League as a condition of the complete abolition of military aviation. She pressed the desirability of creating an international air force which would be put at the disposition of Geneva. The chairman, Mr. Henderson, was commissioned to continue his inquiries so as to obtain unanimity. At long last he discovered that agree-

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ment could not be reached upon the definition of 'the aggressor'—although the vice-chairman, Politis, had proposed a new version founded upon the strictly logical interpretation of M. Litvinov in February, 1933—nor upon the organization of international control, nor on the problem of sanctions, nor on the prohibition of air bombardment, nor on the reduction to uniformity of short-service armies, nor on the budget restrictions, nor on the problem of war material, nor, in fact, upon anything.

IV—CHECKMATE OF THE FOUR-POWER PACT

Thus ended the most impressive accumulation of speeches and waste paper, the result of months and months of committee work and meetings, in the biggest talking shops ever built by human good will and bad faith. And it all ended in smoke.

In this sketch, I have only dwelt on the main points of a bankruptcy which is reported in detail in the Official Report of the League of Nations published in 1935. Any reader who has a taste for wasted ingenuity should consult this book.

There was now no hope of agreement upon anything at all. The failure of the MacDonald Plan was the beginning of the end. The failure was evident, and especially so to the two great Powers, Italy and Britain, which had tried to mediate between Germany and France. Germany had become stiffnecked, and France was determined not to give way on any point. London and Rome grasped the fact that a new Germany had emerged from the weak Weimar Republic, and that this new Germany was almost full-grown. They thought

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it wise, in view of the strength of the new Reich, to grant what was just in her claims, and thus deprecate any future hostility. In March, 1933, Mussolini had profited by the presence of the British ministers at Geneva to invite them to Rome before their discussions with French and German ministers began. These discussions were to turn on the necessary conditions of a policy of collaboration for the preservation of peace in the spirit of the Kellog Pact. In the same month of March the new German Chancellor, in one of his resounding speeches, declared: "For years Germany has waited in vain for the other States to perform the promise of disarmament which they made to us. The National Government sincerely hopes that it will not need to increase our armaments and the German army, on the condition that at last the rest of the world fulfils its promise to disarm radically."

On 17th May he repeated his peaceable assurances. Mr. MacDonald and Sir John Simon visited Italy, and then imparted the Italian conversations to M. Daladier and M. Paul-Boncour. These gentlemen agreed in principle, but declared explicitly that the proposed *entente* must be made within the framework of the League of Nations.

Germany was then in the fullest fervour of the National-Socialist Movement. At first she received the proposals without enthusiasm. The Little Entente was alarmed by the appearance of the Great Powers only as the sole organizers of peace. Hitler's irresistible propaganda had risen higher and higher year by year ever since the slight ripple of revolution in Munich in 1923, and by now it was a flood swamping the whole Reich. Hitler himself had at last triumphed over von Papen and von Schleicher and their ministries.

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On 30th January old Marshal von Hindenburg had appointed his late rival in the Presidential elections to the post of Chancellor. Since that date the Führer has been undisputed master both of the Reich and of the Reichstag, which is elected by his orders. He is the living representative of the pride and the humiliation of a great people, weary of being treated as a second-rate Power. One cannot believe that he hates France any less than he did in the days of his novitiate, when he preached hatred of France in *Mein Kampf*.^{*} But now that he is the undisputed master of a great nation, he thinks it is wiser to attempt conciliation on points which he cannot—perhaps does not wish to—gain by force.

General Goering himself visited Rome, and Nadolny made a conciliatory speech at Geneva. These two circumstances cleared up the outlook to all appearances. The Little Entente, on its side, seemed resigned to the amendments proposed by France, and the Four-Power Pact looked very promising. A definition text was worked out on 7th June, and signed on 15th July, 1933.

The Four Powers had bound themselves from the start not to have recourse to war for a space of ten years. They agreed to carry out effectively Articles 10, 16, and 19 of the Covenant (mutual assistance, sanctions against aggressors, a re-examination of treaties which had become inapplicable); further, to work for the solution of all problems in a spirit of

^{*} This book was written in 1923 during the occupation of the Ruhr. It is still the bible of the Nazis. It is a pity that since Hitler became the head of the German State he has not thought it worth while to add to new editions of this book which is now out of date, to the effect that it no longer corresponds in relation to France, and to the constant declarations of friendly advances made in his broadcast speeches.

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collaboration; and, lastly, to push the work of the Disarmament Conference to a rapid and effective conclusion.

The Pact was too good to be true. We must notice that in the first sketch of the new pact, the second article laid down the principle that the Four States accepted the revision of the Peace treaties, "in cases where the existing situations are of a kind likely to bring about conflicts between States." This article was vetoed by the *beati possidentes* of the Little Entente, and it was omitted in the definite text, and was merely implied in the reference to Article 19. This sleight of hand made of the Four-Power Pact under the existing conditions a new element of uncertainty. Though it had some really valuable clauses, yet it stabilized the impossible situation of the conquered peoples of Central Europe, and this situation had been created by the treaties. It went without saying that Prague, Belgrade, and Bucharest would never allow Geneva to discuss the advantages gained. Consequently the Four-Power Pact became practically inoperative. It conformed to the letter of the Covenant, but not to the spirit, for the spirit of the League should bind not to the perpetuation of risks of war, but to the continued creation of Peace.

The Four-Power Pact was never ratified. France had only given way out of deference to Britain and Italy, and no more wished to compromise on her own armaments than Germany upon the recognition of equality of rights. The faint hopes which had been kindled were extinguished for ever.

On 23rd June, while these delicate negotiations were still going on, the Conference had resolved to adjourn. It was to reassemble in October. But everyone realized after this second adjournment that it was a tacit confession of defeat.

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At this same time a new Secretary-General to the League was appointed. The English chief, Sir Eric Drummond, was succeeded by his assistant secretary, M. Avenol. He was a Frenchman with a strong bias towards Britain, and was thoroughly broken in to the methods and the spirit of the concern. There were also a few other changes in the staff and organization, but it all made no real difference at all.

The Governments had attained their object. So, too, had the International Arms Trade. The Great Powers had paraded their intentions to disarm, but they had used the Conference only as a means of securing their hegemony.

When the Conference was over, the League had lost prestige, and had lost strength. The nations had been mystified, but after the first adjournment in July, 1932, they had spotted the fact that they were being hoaxed. All that now remained was to pay the piper.

CHAPTER II

FROM *STATUS QUO* TO REARMAMENT

I—THE GRIP OF STEEL

It oppresses the whole world, it holds every nation like a vice, this monstrous grip that is all the more terrible for being gloved in shadow—a power of darkness, a dominion invisible and omnipresent. Its maleficent arts have poisoned the past since the beginning of the century: it is strangling the present: it dooms the future to death unless there is a universal revolt before the new deluge, the deluge of fire, begins.

From the destruction of yesterday one can judge what that of to-morrow will be like. The first fires of the Balkan wars and the conflagration of the World War have shown clearly the enormities of which the Armaments 'International' is capable. Even before 1914 the shameful traffic had spread its murderous toils in which the nations were to be caught like flies. The internationalization of finance had secretly planned and prepared the way for the internationalization of slaughter.

Every national defence force had bought iron for its weight in gold—from Krupp, from Vickers-Armstrong, from Skoda, from Creusot, huge concerns with mixed boards of directors who fraternized over the sharing of the dividends. Ostensibly independent firms, they had holdings in each other's stock, and worked in concert.

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The lead in this business of equipping armies and fleets was taken by Germany and Great Britain, but France and Austria were not far behind and had a handsome share of the profits. The Germans had armed Belgium and also, in part, Italy, and so were destined to see their guns turned against them. In Russia they had built arsenals; they paid for the privilege with their dead at Tannenburg. Most of the navies were armoured with Krupp steel, which proved its quality against German shell-fire. The little Parceval aeroplanes, the patent of which had been sold to London in 1913, enabled the British fleet to avoid and sink enemy submarines. One hundred and twenty million fuses manufactured by Vickers on licence from Krupp were the means whereby German bodies were mangled by high explosives, but each represented so much profit to the Lord of Essen. On the other hand, Britain saw her soldiers mown down on all fronts by her own Maxim guns, while at the Dardanelles her ships were crippled or sent to the bottom by the guns and mines she had sold to the Turks. As for France, she had sanctioned loans amounting to 214 milliards of francs, part of which was applied to financing huge orders to Creusot. The lenders were never to see a sou of their money again, but on the Eastern front the interest was duly received by her soldiers in hard steel. At Gallipoli the Turkish 'reconnaissance' undertook to pay off the debt, while Bulgaria drove back French troops with France's own 75's. Austria-Hungary had contributed to the Russian armaments and so to her own losses.

Nor was that all. Not only were the initial means supplied for a promiscuous massacre, but even when the war was in progress the Blood-money Market continued active. The

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slaughter must go on, for it was a real bit of fat—the wooden cross for some and the Cross of Honour and bulging pockets for the others. What matter if the cemeteries filled. The yards were working overtime. Small concerns had their purses lined and Big Business made bloated profits. The poor devil in uniform who faltered in the field was shot, but it was ‘hats off’ to the ghoul who traded with the enemy without the slightest qualm.

The importance of nickel in the manufacture of munitions is well known. While in Britain a consignment to Krupp borne under the Russian flag was confiscated, in France a Norwegian vessel carrying 2500 tons of the useful metal from New Caledonia (the Rothschild mines) was brought into Brest as lawful prize. But straightway comes the order from Paris that she is to be released! This, mark you, was in October, 1914, when trench warfare was beginning. The naval authorities were astounded. They asked for confirmation. The order was repeated: “Let her go.” And the French nickel sailed for Hamburg! Nickel was not put on the contraband list until 1915. By that time Germany had secured her supplies. When later she had to renew them, the submarine *Deutschland* went to America with a cargo of chemical products and brought back 400 tons of nickel, worth \$600,000, supplied by the American Metal Company, a concern intimately associated with the Metallgesellschaft of Frankfurt. Did this also come from New Caledonia?

Then there was the case of the Peñarroya lead. Here we have, in possession of the richest leadmines in the world, a Spanish company in which the controlling interest was held by the Rothschilds jointly with the same Metallgesellschaft in

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which the Kaiser and Krupp were both shareholders—a lucrative partnership that lasted until 1916. On the outbreak of hostilities 150,000 tons of lead were dispatched by Peñarroya to Germany via Switzerland. When France's turn came the price of lead had gone up 100 per cent.

At this tragic juncture Switzerland was, so to speak, the turntable from which each belligerent could pick what it wanted—copper, tin, cotton, scrap-iron. There was a constant demand for raw material. France supplied Krupp with carbides for treating saltpetre and tempering steel. Germany sent France barbed wire. One of the German assaults on Fort Douaumont was ripped up by barbed wire supplied by the Magdeburger Draht-und-Kabelwerke two months before.

While death and destruction were going on between the opposing hosts there were sacrosanct spots that were under the ægis of the cash nexus. For five years the Briey basin, from which Germany drew the ore she needed for the renewal and expansion of her artillery, was a fifty-fifty joint concern of France and Germany protected by aircraft. (The steel manufacturers of German Lorraine shared control with the de Wendels.) On a German map that fell into the hands of General Sarrail this area was marked "To be protected." This instruction was observed by the air forces on both sides to the end of the war. Briey had been left intact when evacuated by the French. When the French reoccupied it after the German evacuation, it was still intact. By the same token the Germans did not worry about the Dombasle mines from which we got our iron. Just as dog doesn't eat dog, so there was between the opposing G.H.Q.s a certain spirit of accommodation.

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The forces of destruction went on without let or hindrance blowing poor devils to bits, playing at skittles with cathedrals, grinding humbler churches to powder, molesting ambulances, and all the time the death-mongers made money and still more money. Capital multiplied tenfold and a hundredfold. J. P. Morgan's have cynically revealed the fact that their transactions on account of France and Germany for war material amounted to £600,000,000, on which 10 per cent. commission at the current rate of exchange would be a milliard and a half of francs (1,500,000,000).*

When peace rumours got abroad and armament shares went down, the subsidized press at once began to whip up the wearied armies and the downtrodden populaces. They raised the cry of 'Defeatism'—a word invented by the blood profiteers—and pat as an echo came the ruthless activities of the courts-martial. Those who howled for 'a fight to a finish' were duly rewarded from the coffers of the slaughter purveyors.

As early as 1920 the 'Internationale' of Gold and Iron had resumed its vast and mysterious workings—disposing of and renewing stocks, raising new spectres of war, and piling up armaments in every country. To take the case of France alone, we know the names of the newspapers financed by the 'Comité des Forges' and the Big Business trusts that were also working for war. We know their annual outlay on publicity—75 million francs openly admitted, plus 25 millions for political graft.

* For further particulars see in *Guerre et Profits* by Otto Lehmann Russbuldt, *Commerce Sanglant* by A Fenner-Brockway, *Marchands de Canons* by H. C. Engerbrecht and F. C. Hanighen (Americans). Consult also the works of Paul Faure, Francis Delaisi, Paul Allard, Launay and Sennac, Charles Reber and E. Zelten, as well as R. Mennevée's *Documents politiques*

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The 'agents de liaison' wormed themselves into every Government department that had to do with national defence. They had access to the General Staffs by the front door and the back door. Sometimes even, as at Geneva, a Government delegate would act as the representative of the joint interests of finance and armaments.

Between a Shaerer who gets caught in the act and a Sir Basil Zaharoff, G.C.B. and Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, to whom Vickers offers a gold cup in recognition of his faithful services, there is the mob of more or less shady middlemen. Big Bugs and Little Bugs are all drawn into the Big-money Dance, many of them honestly believing that in placing their guns and poison gas they are true patriots. These potentates, these kings of no country, are extending their operations and strengthening their alliances.

In 1927 Krupp's acquired a large block of shares in the Swedish Bofors Ordnance and Drydock Company which worked its patents in Scandinavia. Schneider's did the same, the result of this happy combination being that Bofors business rose from 9,300,000 kronen in 1926 to 42,000,000 kronen in 1928. From one end of Europe to the other the dark covering has been woven anew. Only Creusot, which since the end of the war has also controlled the ex-Austrian and Czechoslovak Skoda, shines everywhere. Schneider's, taking advantage of the defeat of the Central Empires, had established about this time the 'Union Européenne,' an offshot of the 'Union Parisienne' which was the bank of their industrial and financial ring. Lastly, in Budapest, Schneider had a controlling interest in the Creditanstalt (National Bank of

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Hungary)—an ideal spot for making a bit out of armament loans.

The metal magnates do not confine themselves to the late Allies in seeking returns on their capital. They will back a horse of any colour. Hence Krupp's rival, Thyssen, the Dutch firm of Pintsch, and Schneider's, through the medium of Skoda, have been pouring into the Nazi coffers marks, florins, and francs, while from the other side of the Atlantic came German-American dollars to swell the subsidies. The British, too—not to mention others who will be dealt with in the chapter on the Sino-Japanese war—saw no reason why they should not take a hand in German rearmament. Germany, even, being ostensibly unable to utilize her factories for herself, made no scruple about becoming once more one of the recognized purveyors for abroad. She made aeroplanes for Russia and poison gas too, though after the phosgene explosion at Hamburg in 1928 the French expert of the Control Commission found that it was a dyeing accident. Naturally, it was out of the question to admit that the German and French chemical industries were intimately related.

I have said enough to show the supremacy of a traffic that in every large country has become a state within the state. Alongside the national manufacturing concerns, which are everywhere insufficient to keep the death trade going, private enterprise in armaments has been going full blast and becoming the economic and political focus of the life of the big nations, the autarchic United States; Japan, where war is now the staple industry, and even the Soviet Union, which will soon be able to supply its own military requirements; Germany, which is spending every penny abroad to import the

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raw materials for the acceleration of rearmament; Britain and France, which have become the universal providers of munitions—the Blood International has forced its dictators on every one of them. Everywhere we see Governments that apparently exist simply and solely to prepare for war. Everywhere the chain of industrial mobilizations, literally putting the nations in irons, is ready to rivet the yoke of general mobilizations on their necks. No money for unemployment, educational development, or great public works; no money for the treatment of tuberculosis, for assisting ex-service men, for endowing scientific research; no money for improving and ennobling life; but floods of gold for preparing and hastening death.

At the very moment of writing the supremacy of these invisible masters of our fate is wielding its irresistible power at Geneva, where the talk about peace, disarmament and law goes on, while the war between Bolivia and Paraguay also goes on, and the Sino-Japanese war unrolls its horrors. Geneva stands helpless before the loosing of the powers of evil.

II—GERMANY LEAVES THE LEAGUE

When on 12th October the Bureau of the General Commission of the League resumed its labours, nothing had apparently changed. The moribund Conference got ready to rehash the remains of the MacDonald Plan, which had been referred for consideration five months before. The plan, it will be remembered, laid down that the Powers subject to armaments restrictions under the Peace treaties must not immediately increase their armaments. No Convention could

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be negotiated, Sir John Simon had declared, that did not comply with this safeguard.

Now from the time of the Tardieu Plan Berlin had felt that Germany would always be up against the irradicable suspicion of a Quai d'Orsay that had been committed to the *status quo* policy. Stresemann's conciliatory Reich was a thing of the past and so even was Brüning's. Already von Papen, the representative of the Junker class, had begun to take a stronger line, and after him General von Schleicher, one of the organizers of the Reichswehr and an open advocate of German rearmament, had not hesitated to declare, in an election speech, his intention "of restoring to Germany, along with equality of rights and complete independence, a military force adequate to the importance of its population and the aim of its policy." Hitler, even more intransigent, had decided to reply to French opposition by perfecting as far as possible the war machine, if not in the spectacular way of large effectives, at least in the matter of material. Having no longer anything to hope for from the Conference, he made an abrupt and dramatic exit.

On the very first day of the Bureau's meeting the president, Mr. Henderson, showed his colleagues a telegram from Baron von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister. It read:

"In the light of the course which recent discussions of the Powers concerned have taken in the matter of disarmament, it is now clear that the Disarmament Conference will not fulfil what is its sole object, namely, general disarmament.

"It is also clear that this failure of the Conference is due solely to unwillingness on the part of the highly armed States to carry out their contractual obligation to disarm.

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“This renders impossible the satisfaction of Germany’s recognized claim to equality of rights, and the condition on which the German Government agreed at the beginning of this year again to take part in the work of the Conference thus no longer exists. The German Government is accordingly compelled to leave the Disarmament Conference.”

It was vain for Mr. Henderson, in his letter of acknowledgment, to protest that the British proposal for equality of rights was an acceptable basis of negotiation for Germany and that he considered the course adopted by the Reich ill-advised—a reply, by the way, in which the U.S.S.R., Turkey, Poland, and Hungary refused to concur. The plain fact remained that Germany, tired of being treated like a naughty child, had taken her irrevocable decision.

In withdrawing from the Conference Germany also withdrew from the League, in which, for all that Henderson had said, the equality of rights promised at Lausanne with the tongue in the cheek had not passed from the abstract plane of juridical recognition. We were back in the old, anxious situation. Seven years had been wasted since the day on which Briand, encouraged by Locarno, had at last brought the Reich to Geneva, with a permanent seat on the Council—seven years during which France and her exacting Allies had rigorously enforced the military and territorial clauses, the financial clauses having wrought their own destruction. What lunacy to imagine that you could keep a whole nation in gaol, so to speak, for ever—a nation of sixty million inhabitants, a prolific nation highly industrialized, whose energy in every field of thought and action proved its continued vitality! Not content that Germany should have been condemned without

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appeal for faults in which all shared, that she should have been deprived of her fleet, and her colonies, the successors of Poincaré, with the exception of Briand, to whatever party they belonged, had all pursued the same policy of fear. History will tell what an irreparable blunder they committed in not granting, while they had it in their power, honourable conditions to the Weimar Republic, and in waiting until from their obstinacy was born the Third Reich with which it was to become increasingly difficult to reach an understanding.

The die was cast. By a practically unanimous vote in a national plebiscite Germany endorsed the decision taken by her Führer. Hitler had now a free hand, yet he did not cease to protest in his speeches that his intentions were pacific and that he was willing to engage in direct conversations; but there was no longer a Big Four pact. Daladier's ministry had been succeeded by Sarraut's—the fourth of that Parliament—after the ephemeral premierships of Herriot and Paul-Boncour. The latter was still at the Quai d'Orsay; he rejected the German offer; hotheads, both in Parliament and on the General Staff, spoke of using force. Between Chancelleries, however, contact was maintained. While Paris haggled over the figure demanded by Germany for her own quota (300,000 men), Mussolini on 4th January, 1934, in a note addressed to London (which always favoured a compromise), accepted it. As if the Disarmament Conference were not virtually dead, interviews and exchanges of memoranda between Governments went on as before. The chief aim of the Quai d'Orsay now was to close up the gap in the security system by throwing Germany back on herself, and Paul-Boncour began to

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extol, and even negotiate, regional understandings and pacts of mutual assistance.

The political hurricane which, after Sarraut, had swept away a short Chautemps ministry and a second Daladier ministry that was even shorter, gave the country a 'Truce Government' following the disturbances of 6th February. Doumergue, summoned from his retirement as a providential resource, formed a Cabinet with Barthou at the Quai d'Orsay and Marshal Pétain at the War Office. The men of 1914 reappeared with all their gloomy associations. That did not hinder the American Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, from sending the British Ambassador an *aide-memoire*, which the League of Nations Report summarizes thus:

- (1) Abolition of arms used primarily for invasion, such as heavy mobile artillery, tanks, bombing aeroplanes, &c.
- (2) A system of automatic and permanent inspection.
- (3) In connexion with the General Convention of Disarmament, the conclusion of a universal pact of non-aggression embodying an undertaking which would prohibit the armed forces of a State from invading a country's territory in violation of rights conferred by treaty.

Clearly it was not merely an ocean that separated the New World from the Old, but a failure to understand the state of mind that now prevailed in Central Europe (Little Entente) and, still more notably, in France. In fact, forestalling the attitude of the United States, the British Government had at the end of January submitted to the Daladier Government a

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memorandum in which it expressed its willingness to settle the security question on the basis of a general scheme of pacts of, non-aggression and to accept the application of an automatic and permanent system of control.

Unfortunately the fact that Britain and America were to that extent in full agreement made no impression on the obstinacy of the National Union Government. Vainly on her part did Italy propose at Geneva on 27th February a scheme of conciliation. It was contained in a letter addressed to Mr. Henderson by Signor Grandi in the name of the Duce. This last compromise proposal, while placing a check on the military ambitions of the Reich, admitted them in so far as they were equitable. The Italian plan fared no better than the others; like its predecessors it had to contend with the hostile analysis of the jurists and the objections of principle that had paralysed every effort. On 17th March, without paying any attention to the Italian intervention, old Barthou, who like Doumergue had learned nothing and forgotten nothing, replied to the British note that France regarded the question of disarmament as ruled by the principles set out in Article 8 of the Covenant—reduction of National Armaments in so far as compatible with security and the preamble of Part V of the Treaty, viz.: "In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval and aviation clauses which follow."

Fourteen years of European evolution were wiped out by a stroke of the pen. The French point of view had not varied; it held rigidly to the terms of the 'Diktat' at a time when Hitlerian Germany regarded it as moribund, if not dead. Note

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the striking contrast of the attitude of the Reich, which on 16th April, in reply to the British memorandum, declared its acceptance of it as basis for a convention, subject to the reservation that it claimed the right immediately to take appropriate measures for aerial defence. Outside of military preparations it agreed to the disarmament of the S.S. and S.A. and a five years' postponement for the disarmament of the other Powers.

In spite of these important concessions, France stuck to her refusal. On 17th April, in a new note to London, signed by Barthou but in fact dictated by Doumergue acting in concert with the General Staff and the armament firms, the point of view of the previous month was reaffirmed in categorical terms: "The Treaty, the whole Treaty, and nothing but the Treaty," varying, "The Covenant, the whole Covenant, and nothing but the Covenant." It was the end of all negotiation, direct or indirect, between France and Germany on the subject of disarmament. By clinging desperately to the rotten rope of *status quo*, the French rulers ruined themselves and their individual security and collective security owing to the resumption or rather the acceleration of the armaments race.

III—THE U.S.S.R. TAKES ITS SEAT AT GENEVA

As early as 9th February, 1934, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey, discerning that the first lesson to be drawn from the check to the Disarmament Conference (as from the evident impotence of the League of Nations) was to group themselves according to geographical affinities, had given the first example of a regional pact of mutual assistance.

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They guaranteed each other's frontiers and set up for themselves a Permanent Council, which at its last meeting made provision for closer political and trade relations. This wise example shows what could be done for all Europe if the Powers were not divided by the violent antagonisms created between this and that group by the Peace treaty muddle.

The task that was to engage Barthou until his tragic end was the tightening of the grip of France and her Allies upon the vanquished of 1919. He started out on his travels, going first to Warsaw, where he saw Marshal Pilsudski and Colonel Beck; this being the most urgent of his business. Poland, though virtually bound to France by a military alliance, had concluded a pact of non-aggression with Germany, which gave rise to some anxiety, inasmuch as one did not know what secret clauses it might contain, but it was clear enough that Polish policy was now looking to Berlin instead of to Paris. From the Russian standpoint, also, the new orientation constituted a serious threat in view of Hitler's notorious anti-Bolshevist sentiments. If the academician minister's eloquence failed to revive the languishing zeal of a Poland that was becoming pro-German instead of pro-French, it appeared to work wonders at Bucharest. The Roumanian frontier took the place of the Vistula in official pronouncements. Even at Belgrade Barthou was warmly received: at Prague the fraternal greetings of democracies vied in cordiality with the embraces of kings.

Reassured by the Great Ally's intransigence towards Berlin, the capitals of the Little Allies regained their faith in help from a quarter of which, upon the signature of the Big-Four Pact, they had begun to be doubtful. To make up for the

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weakening of Poland, Barthou, in spite of his anti-Soviet record, concluded, like Paul-Boncour, that the system of alliances and consequently of protection for France would not be complete so long as Russia remained outside.

The Soviet régime was showing an increasing inclination to take an active interest in the European policy of the Great Powers of which Geneva was the instrument. Anticipating this, Litvinov, after the second adjournment of the World Economic Conference, held in London in July, 1933, had signed with ten States—Poland, Roumania, Turkey, Esthonia, Latvia, Finland, Afghanistan, Persia, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia—a Convention reviving and confirming the definition of aggression as formulated by Politis. The text of this definition reads all the more curiously when we remember that, even after Japan's attack on China and Italy's on Ethiopia, it has not yet been formally ratified by the League. Hence, when later sanctions were declared against the Rome Government, they were not based on the aggression complaint, but only on the fact that Italy had failed to observe her obligations under the Covenant. The Politis text, however, was clear:

The aggressor in an international conflict, with due consideration to the agreements existing between the parties involved in the conflict, will be considered the State which will be the first to commit any of the following acts:

- (1) declaration of war against another State;
- (2) invasion by armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (3) an attack by armed land, naval, or air forces, upon the territory, naval vessels, or aircraft of another State;
- (4) naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;

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- (5) aid to armed bands formed on the territory of a State and invading the territory of another State, or refusal, despite demands on the part of the State subjected to attack, to take all possible measures on its own territory to deprive the said bands of any aid and protection.

An extremely curious circumstance is that, when in 1920 this text was submitted for the general approval of the League before the second adjournment of the Disarmament Conference, the British delegation had proposed a similar plan, except that it omitted Paragraph 4 regarding naval blockade. No doubt Britain was afraid of being dragged further than she was prepared to go.

In June, 1934, Litvinov took the opportunity of one of the intermittent meetings of the Bureau of the General Commission to return to the charge with the proposal that work on disarmament should be resumed and that the definition of aggression should be taken as agreed. There was only the threat of Germany since her retirement. One seat at the League was vacant—that of Germany—Germany, of whom until Hitler's accession to power the U.S.S.R. had been the ally (Treaty of Rapallo), the customer (German engineers, German machinery, German arms and poison-gas), and even the friend in so far as the Communists of the Second Reich followed the revolutionary politics of Moscow . . . The Third Reich arrived, crushing Communists and Jews . . . The Soviet régime, already concerned by the hostility of the other deserter from Geneva, Japan, who, having annexed Manchuria, now harboured designs on Mongolia—paid equal attention to the new danger looming up in the West. At the time of the World Economic Conference in London in 1933, had not

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Hugenberg—then German Minister of Economic Affairs and the great financier of the Nazi press and party—had he not spoken of the Ukraine as lawful prize? Had not Hitler, the fanatical anti-Marxist, just been elected President in succession to Hindenburg (19th August) by thirty-five million votes to four million? The Führer's Pan-Germanism was more aggressive than William II's. Once it was fully armed, would it not turn towards Russian soil?

On 18th September, 1934, therefore, the U.S.S.R. took the permanent seat on the League Council left vacant by Hitler's withdrawal. The event was of the first importance, for the present as well as the future of Geneva, in virtue of the unwearied efforts that, ever since the advent of Stalin to power, Russia had made on behalf of general disarmament or, failing that, progressive or controlled disarmament. Russia came to Geneva with a completely coherent and equitable doctrine, which, in an ideal League, not based on plunder and misunderstanding, but animated by a generous spirit of solidarity and including all the States in the world, great and small, would have been the irrefragable proof of 'the indivisibility of peace.' But for that very reason, seeing that Germany and Japan no longer sat at Geneva, some sceptics asked if peace—not only European peace but world peace—was not in danger of being disturbed some day by reason of Berlin and Tokio having dissociated themselves from the 'indivisible' system.

It will be seen presently that Moscow harboured no such thoughts, since both before and after the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Treaty, the signatories, MM. Litvinov and Laval,

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offered (without result however) to sign an 'Eastern Pact of non-aggression' with Poland and Germany. From 1920 to the fall of the Weimar Republic Germany had been the willing contractor for equipping Russia's industry and army, but now Hitler's Germany saw with chagrin the U.S.S.R. drawing towards France and thus reconstituting the old anti-German *bloc*. The admission of the U.S.S.R. was a turning point in the history of the League, where hitherto Britain and France had been the preponderating influences. Now the whole 'weight of the vast workers' and peasants' Empire was to be thrown into the balance of international affairs.

The last months of 1934 likewise brought to Geneva, which since the German withdrawal had been somewhat neglected by the Governments, a renewal of immediate usefulness. On 19th October King Alexander of Yugoslavia was murdered at Marseilles by Croat terrorists. With him fell the Foreign Minister in the Doumergue Cabinet. Louis Barthou, slain in the course of his duties, preceded to the grave by a few days only his friend and colleague, Poincaré. The death of these two men, whose embittered chauvinism had been largely responsible for erecting and maintaining a barrier of hostile prejudice between France and Germany, was not, however, to prevent their sinister work from going on.

The Marseilles assassins belonged to a group the heads of which had taken refuge in Hungary. Hence a complaint from Belgrade to the League Council charging the Budapest authorities with complicity. For a moment there was a danger that the diplomatic tension might develop into something much worse; the new occupant of the Quai d'Orsay, Pierre Laval, managed to intervene and compose the difference.

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About the same time a more serious conflict was averted by the efforts of the same skilful negotiator. The moment for the settlement of the Saar question was at hand. On 4th June the League Council had fixed 13th January, 1935, as the date of the plebiscite by which the Saar population would declare its will—return to Germany or continuance under the government of Geneva, the mineral rights remaining with France. Hitler and Doumergue had undertaken to refrain from all action, direct or indirect, calculated to interfere with a free vote. There was, indeed, a noisy propaganda on the part of Germany, and it is true that in a certain section of the French press there was a tactless campaign in favour of maintaining separation that was no less unwise . . . Fortunately, on 11th December the League Council, supported by M. Laval, decided to place at the disposal of its High Commissioner an international police force made up of British, Italian, Swedish, and Dutch contingents. On 13th January, 1935, the plebiscite was held. Out of 528,000 votes 476,089 were cast for return to the Fatherland, 46,513 were for the *status quo* and 2083 for annexation to France.

The operation had created none of the troubles that had been apprehended. Having at command for the first time an international police force, the League had imposed respect for law and order. Here there is no possible analogy to the use of an international army—the opposing of forces of the super-State to those of some great nation that has resolved upon war. The contingents from Britain, Italy, Sweden, and the Netherlands had nothing to fear but little affrays of no consequence. The issue had been decided beforehand by fidelity alike to

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ethnic origins and historic tradition, the Saar being indisputably German.

IV—THE UNSTABLE EQUILIBRIUM OF ALLIANCES

By withdrawing from the League Germany had ceased to be a member of the Four-Power Pact. The diplomacy of the remaining members did not wait for the Saar plebiscite before seeking to checkmate Berlin, now feared by all, by returning to the traditional policy of encirclement. Once more Geneva was forsaken. The system of individual agreements and alliances was more in favour than ever.

Embarking upon a policy for which ultimately he was to be severely censured, but of which it was impossible at the time to foresee the repercussions, M. Laval made it his first task to end the divergence of interests, the open animosity which for years had set Italy at odds with *la sorella latrina*. In Tunisia, with its numerous Italian population, the Fascist slogan was admittedly "*A noi!*" Corsica and the County of Nice, which is nothing if not Italian, were included in the Roman almanacs. Quite fair, if Savoy . . . Here was one of the deplorable results of the Fascist movement and its war mentality. Worked up by twenty years of inflammatory exhortations and war litanies, the youth, a whole generation fashioned in the image of its Duce, appeared, by its worship of brute force, to be making the Italian people forget their recent brotherhood in arms with France as well as their ancient common origin in Mediterranean and Latin culture.

Laval won Mussolini round on 8th January by concessions in Africa, a belated fulfilment of the promises made by the

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secret treaties concluded in London and at St. Jean-de-Maurienne during the war, which had not yet been kept by France. A private agreement was reached about Tunisia. A small block of shares in the Djibuti-Addis Ababa Railway was handed over to Rome* along with a huge slice of desert in the Tchad Colony.

Here was an opening in Ethiopia for a new Roman expansion. It has been said that it left Italy's hands free for the penetration of Ethiopia by force of arms. But such a possibility seemed most unlikely when the French minister, committed, like all his predecessors, to the policy of collective security, was setting to work—with the good will of Britain—to form the famous Stresa Front. He could now count on Italian collaboration which, since the assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss, had been assured by the necessity of guarding the Brenner against the Nazis. The Alps seemed to be safe. The next business was to bring Britain round. The London agreement was signed on 3rd February: it provided that the two countries should give mutual support by air in the event of either of them being the victim of unprovoked attack.

Opinion in London was uneasy about the intensive rearmament openly pursued by the Reich. On 1st March—at the same time as Hitler, speaking on the occasion of the reoccupation of the Saar, was proclaiming to all the world his pacific intentions and publicly holding out his hand to France—Great

* As far back as 1894 Menelik had given a railway concession to a Swiss and a Frenchman (*Compagnie imperiale ethiopienne*). Work was begun in 1897, and by 1902, when it was suspended, 300 kilometres (200 miles) of the line from Djibuti had been constructed. In 1908 a new company with Menelik's approval (*Chemin-de-fer franco-ethiopien de Djibuti à Addis Ababa*) resumed the operations. It included in addition to the Franco-Ethiopian directors, a British and an Italian director.

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Britain came out with a White Book. MacDonald, who was still head of a Cabinet in which Baldwin was only second man, declared that "Britain, having disarmed in advance (by reducing her naval effectives by 48 per cent. while those of Japan and the United States had been increased by 35 per cent. and 20 per cent. respectively), now feels obliged to rearm." On 11th and 13th March the Government programme for bringing Great Britain's military forces up to strength again and increasing the Royal Air Force was approved by both Houses of Parliament.

On 15th March in the French Chamber M. Flandin announced that, in order to make up for the loss of effectives arising twenty years after the war from the danger of defective classes, his Government had decided to keep with the colours the class due for discharge in April and to extend the period of military service to eighteen months. The dug-outs which had been constructed all along the Eastern frontier and had swallowed up millions of tons of concrete had to be filled with men. The chauvinist press was not satisfied. It demanded that service should be extended to two years.

Next day Hitler proclaimed the re-establishment of the national army and compulsory service in Germany. The Reich forces were thus to be raised to 500,000 combatant troops plus 350,000 of other services. A broadcast speech informed the world that "the German people, having disarmed in accordance with the terms of the Treaty, while the other contracting parties, so far from disarming in their turn, have steadily increased and perfected their offensive weapons, the Government of the Reich feels compelled to take the measures required by the situation."

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In the midst of all this Sir John Simon, accompanied by the Lord Privy Seal, Mr. Eden (whose first appearance in international diplomacy this was), went off on a journey of information, first, to Berlin and then, by himself, to Prague and Warsaw, while Mr. Eden pushed on to Moscow. On his return to London the Foreign Secretary stated the Hitlerian demands, viz., a fleet of 555,000 tons, equivalent to 35 per cent. of the British tonnage, parity with Great Britain and France in the air, and the return of the former German colonies. This, following upon the abolition of the financial clauses of the Treaty, would have been the first step towards the revision of the territorial clauses; as to the revision of the military clauses everybody knew that was in process.

Meanwhile Mr. Eden had reached Moscow where he was effusively welcomed and conferred with Litvinov, Stalin, and the Red Army chief, Voroshiloff. On 31st March an Anglo-Soviet *communiqué* announced that there was no conflict to divide Great Britain and Russia. The French Government was thereupon able to press on with the negotiations initiated since 1931. But before arriving at the conclusion of the treaty it was preparing, it had the more urgent task of organizing the Franco-Anglo-Italian counterblast to the German menace.

On 11th April a formal conference was held at Stresa, or more exactly in the Borromean Islands in Lake Maggiore. France was represented by Flandin and Laval, Britain by MacDonald and Simon, and Italy by Mussolini, Suvich, and Aloisi. On 14th April the following conclusions had been reached, viz.:

(1) Adoption by France, Great Britain, and Italy of a

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common line in the forthcoming debate at Geneva on German rearmament.

- (2) Steps to be taken to ascertain if the Reich adhered to the Anglo-French air pact of 3rd February.
- (3) Declaration that the rearmament of the Reich made it impossible to proceed with the negotiations for the quantitative reduction of armaments.

Thus each side charged the other with a breach of faith for which the victors appeared to be most to blame, for the tactics of the vanquished were but the latter's reply to the obvious strategy of the former.

The Stresa Conference was likewise concerned with two other matters touching Eastern Europe and the Danube. As to the former, from the beginning of the year the U.S.S.R. had been working for a Three-Power (Germany, Poland, and Russia) Pact of mutual assistance as the touchstone of Hitlerian intentions. Now on the occasion of Sir John Simon's trip to Berlin he had unfortunately been given to understand that the Reich would have none of it. Poland said the same. There remained the possibility of bilateral pacts of mutual assistance, *e.g.*, France-Russia, Russia-Czechoslovakia, Czechoslovakia-France, and even (?) France-Poland. On the other hand, there was the outline of a Danube plan. For what purpose? First of all, the protection of Austria, who ever since the murder of Chancellor Dollfuss had been threatened with a new Hitlerian offensive for the summary realization of the *Anschluss*; and, in the next place, to prevent Austria and Hungary, who were also victims of the treaties, from following up their request for rearmament.

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The Stresa signatories fixed 20th May for a meeting in Rome of representatives of all the Powers interested in the maintenance of Austrian independence. But at Geneva the Little Entente refused its concurrence, the projected meeting never got beyond a preliminary conversation between Italy, Austria, and Hungary. There the matter rested. The Rome Conference did not take place. The contemplated plan disappeared for ever under the waters of the Danube.*

On 15th April the League Council opened its eighty-fifth session, an extraordinary meeting summoned at the instance of France to consider what was to be done about the German decision of 16th March. All the members of the Stresa Conference were present with the exception of Mussolini.

A memorandum by the Quai d'Orsay setting forth the whole list of Germany's delinquencies, both before and since Berlin's unilateral denunciation of the treaty, was so stiff that it could not be put on the agenda, as no *rapporteur* could be found. Laval had to be content with submitting to the Council the resolution that had been drafted at the Isola Bella. It declared that Germany (though she had been out of the League for six months) had failed "in the duties imposed on all members of the international community," condemned "every unilateral repudiation of international engagements, and provided for the appointment of a committee to report on the economic and financial measures which might be taken in the event of any new default calculated to endanger peace."

* But in 1936, after the break-up of the Stresa Front, we find Britain and France trying to fish it up again, Moscow to take the place of Rome. After the funeral of George V representatives of the Central and Eastern powers repaired to the Quai d'Orsay to organize a big refloatation scheme. Vienna remained the bone of contention.

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Sir John Simon and M. Benes supported the motion and so, be it noted, did Baron Aloisi. No one suspected how soon the Stresa laurels would be cut down and the measures prepared for one dictatorship would be turned against another.

The Franco-Anglo-Italian motion was carried unanimously. Thirteen States (France, Great Britain, Italy, the U.S.S.R., Argentina, Australia, Chile, Spain, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Czechoslovakia, and Turkey) joined in the censure of Germany. Only Denmark did not vote.

France returned to the charge on 25th May next when she asked the League to lay down the economic and financial measures that might be applied in any future case of a State, whether a League member or not, endangering peace by unilaterally repudiating its international engagements. The chief measures contemplated were "the effective prohibition of all export to the territory of the offending State of arms and war material, and likewise of all raw materials specially fitted for the manufacture of war material or other raw materials of less specialized use or any other product of which it may be deemed important to deprive the offending State." Article XVI was to be thus furbished up ready for use on the first opportunity.

But meanwhile—paying no attention to the protest lodged by the Reich as far back as 20th April against the resolution passed on 17th April, a contemptuous note in which Hitler disputed the right of the Governments represented on the Council to set themselves up as judges of Germany—Pierre Laval had set out for Moscow to the alternate strains of the "Marseillaise" and the "Internationale." After a short stop at Warsaw he arrived at the White Russia and Baltic Station.

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A welcome even more enthusiastic than that accorded to Mr. Eden was reserved for the representative of France. On 2nd May the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance (which was shortly to be followed by an identical pact with Czechoslovakia) was signed.

The obligations which it embodied, said this diplomatic instrument, derived from those which arose under three articles of the League Covenant, viz., Article X (undertaking to respect and maintain against all external aggression the territorial integrity and present political independence of all member States), Article XV (settlement of disputes by arbitration), and Article XVI (sanctions against the aggressor State). That is to say, the new treaty was a private understanding not only strictly in accord with the Covenant but consistent with Locarno. In the event of aggression (German, of course, that meant) the two parties were to consult at once, submit the dispute to the Council, and in case of urgency take the necessary measures of defence which were subsequently to be ratified by the League.

While the Franco-Soviet wedding festivities were in progress, Marshal Pilsudski was dying at Warsaw. Pierre Laval having put his signature to the parchment which, in the name of so-called collective security, added a special security to France's anti-German policy, once more broke his journey in Poland to attend the funeral of the old Marshal. In a Cracow hotel, before taking the train for Paris, he met General Goering who also had come for the funeral to represent Germany. Pierre Laval had since described their interview as affecting. We may take it that the French negotiator repeated to the Prussian Minister-President what he and

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Litvinov had just declared on the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet treaty, viz., that in a divided Europe the only purpose of such an act was to further the maintenance of peace. It was not aimed at anybody and there was nothing to prevent Germany from yet adhering to the pact which but lately, like Poland, she had refused to sign. Failing a treaty of mutual assistance with Moscow, which Hitler had absolutely rejected, why not a non-aggression agreement if National Socialism was not so prejudiced against the U.S.S.R. as the Führer and his lieutenants had declared?

Unfortunately, on 21st May, at a special meeting of the Reichstag Hitler made an indirect reply in a long broadcast speech defending his policy but breathing not a word about an eventual pact of non-aggression with the U.S.S.R. On the contrary, he reiterated his rejection of mutual assistance. A comparison of "the excellence of Aryan National Socialism" with the "abominable doctrine of Bolshevism" further widened the gulf between the two revolutionary creeds.

None the less the fourteen points with which the Führer wound up his profession of faith were quite capable of affording a basis of discussion for an advance towards a new European understanding. Once more Hitler insisted that Germany's new defensive organization implied "no threat whatsoever to any other nation, either by land, air, or sea." As to reduction of armaments, he declared himself "ready to participate actively in any effort directed to a practical limitation of armaments." The statements that followed were in the most explicit terms.

Here were proposals that would have been worth considering even if they had been prompted by ulterior motives.

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Either the Fuhrer was sincere and the opportunity of checking the fatal armaments race must be seized; or he was playing for time, which was yet another reason for taking him at his word. But what was to be expected of a diplomacy which in 1932 had refused to allow the German army to be raised to 200,000 and again in 1934 to 300,000 men? Now it was faced with a *fait accompli*. Faithful to its routine, it saw no other remedy for the mischief but the strengthening of its alliances.

What with the Stresa Front, the Franco-Soviet Treaty, the Anglo-Russian negotiations, the Treaty of Mutual Assistance that Prague in due course was to sign with Moscow, and lastly the Little Entente's renewal of close relations with France, it was obvious that Germany's way to the East was barred even more formidably than in 1914. And this was the Germany born of the treaties—a Hitlerian Germany, a Germany in a hectic fever, a Germany entrenched in its 'Aryanism,' whose intentions were an unknown quantity.

But all of a sudden in this encircling operation undertaken in the name of mutual assistance and collective security, there was a hitch. Faithful to her traditional policy, Britain took—on behalf of what exercised her most, viz., her naval supremacy—an unforeseen step which, without warning, smashed the Stresa Front two months after it had been proclaimed. Early in June, 1935, Hitler's ambassador at large, Herr von Ribbentrop, came to London with proposals for the Admiralty. One morning (18th June) France was dumfounded to learn that an Anglo-German naval agreement had been concluded. Germany henceforth would be entitled to a tonnage equal to 35 per cent. of the British strength (which on the Washington Convention scale of 1,201,000 tons for Great Britain would

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give her 420,000 tons). In submarines she was allowed equality with Great Britain provided that the total tonnage allowance was not thereby exceeded.

Great Britain thus laid the foundations of a separate peace with the Third Reich. She gave Germany liberty to build and maintain a fleet far beyond the limitations of Versailles. She thus swallowed the military rearmament of the Reich and condoned the unilateral repudiations of the Treaty. These, like all previous proceedings, took place without reference to Geneva—the dummy figure that is only brought in when a bogey is wanted.

After fifteen years of the League, nine of them consumed in palaver about disarmament that was futile if not worse, the great countries have ended up by returning to their policies of national egoism, and the world finds itself on the brink of an even deeper abyss than before. As in 1914, secret diplomacy is weaving its web of schemes and plots. But now it is not France that takes the lead.

Rather than agree to concessions which, if there was to be European collaboration, would mean that Germany would return to Geneva as an equal, France aligned herself with the British Empire of whose realism and indifference to anything but its own immediate interest she had just had fresh experience in the naval agreement with Germany. At the same time she cultivated the U.S.S.R., which, like France, viewed the National Socialist menace with alarm.

There is one ludicrous fact that shows that, while everything that matters is done outside it, the League of Nations is very punctilious on matters of form. The Disarmament Conference, which fell asleep on 12th October, 1933—the

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date on which Germany left it—has not been buried to this day. It was in vain that its most worthy president, Arthur Henderson, saw fit to quit this mortal scene on 21st October, 1935; the Bureau of the General Commission survives him like an atrophied gland that no longer secretes.

PART IV

JUSTICE ADJUSTED

"Patriotism is the corruption of History."

—GOETHE.

CHAPTER I

THE WAR BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY, AND THE WAR BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS is powerless to settle disputes between nations peaceably, when nations are determined to realize their territorial ambitions by force. We shall find no better instances of this than the wars which have been fought and are still being fought in Central America and in Eastern China. They anticipated the Italo-Abyssinian war in a remarkable manner. Thus while wars—conflicts as they are called—remain a constant factor in the life of the world, the Assembly at Geneva has proved unable to define 'justice,' nor to enforce its decisions, even in cases where the facts pointed out the aggressor beyond the possibility of dispute.

I—THE CHACO

It will be remembered that in 1928 a frontier incident had taken place, such as constantly cause trouble between Bolivia and Paraguay, both of whom are members of the League. In consequence, Paraguay had complained to the Council at Geneva, and Briand had successfully imposed a temporary compromise upon the two belligerents. In 1932 the war had broken out again in an exasperated form.

Situated in the centre of South America, both Latin in stock, the two States were unequally matched. Bolivia is three

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times as large as France, and has a population of more than three millions. Paraguay is only one-third the size of Bolivia, and has a population of less than a million. Bolivia has lost her only seaboard province to Chile, and is cut off from the Pacific; Paraguay has likewise lost her access to the Atlantic by reason of her defeat at the hands of Brazil, the Argentine, and Uruguay.

Thus both are landlocked. Between them flows the mighty stream of the Parana, which is several kilometres wide. It is the confluence of the Paraguay River and the Pilcomago River. The three form a commercial highway which is invaluable both to Paraguay and Bolivia. They provide Bolivia with an outlet towards the Atlantic, and Paraguay with an entrance to the continental hinterland. Before the two streams unite to form the Parana, they enclose a large territory, roughly triangular in shape; the subsoil here is supposed to be rich in petroleum. Both Bolivia and Paraguay aimed at the sole possession of this region. It is known as the Chaco Desert, immemorially held by a few scattered tribes of Indians. It is also the converging point of the highways of Central South America, where the route from the Atlantic coast meets with those from the Andes.

Bolivia holds the greater part of the Chaco, but Paraguay maintained that it properly belonged to her, as being geographically part of her hinterland. A merciless war broke out, war to the death, throughout the desert and its few oases, known as the Green Hell. This was a godsend to the armament firms who competed fiercely for the custom of the two belligerents. Once more these two went to Geneva.

On 3rd July, 1933, the Council adopted a report which

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created a commission of five, who were to visit the disputed area and so formulate a settlement. The delegation travelled by way of Montevideo and visited both Bolivia and Paraguay. Both sides accepted an armistice on 18th December, and representatives from both were summoned to Montevideo to negotiate conditions of security and peace. But these efforts were in vain. The armistice ended on 6th January, 1934. The commission proposed a territorial readjustment which was wholeheartedly rejected by both parties. Bolivia requested the Council to lay the matter before the Assembly. The Assembly was much concerned and appointed a committee of twenty-two members. This committee was to study the question. It is still doing so.

According to the many papers and reports supplied to the League of Nations by the Government of Paraguay, the greater share of the responsibility for the war must fall on Bolivia. In their powerful memorandum of 8th March, Paraguay makes clear the intentional acts of hostility committed by Bolivia over a long period of time; for more than fifty years Bolivia has been working for the conquest of the Chaco, and has made intensive preparations for aggression. She has done this in the material sense by floating loans abroad to finance her armaments, and by the construction of strategic roads and outposts. She has done this in the moral sense by inoculating her youth with warlike propaganda. The Government of La Paz only consented to the truce of 1928 because its preparations were not yet matured. It was the Government of La Paz which reopened the hostilities in 1932.

But the League of Nations declared Bolivia to be the innocent party. It was Paraguay that was judged to have broken

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the Covenant. In May, 1935, the Council demanded the withdrawal of troops to their base lines. But as the Paraguayans were the conquerors, this solution did not suit them, and they refused to obey. The application of sanctions was discussed at Geneva, but they were never employed as the great Powers of America (the United States, Brazil, the Argentine, and Chile) gave notice that such measures were unjust, and they would take no part in them. Finally, it was these Powers that took the matter in hand. On 12th June, 1935, they brought the two belligerents to accept an armistice by which each kept any gains that had been made.

This was one of the League's characteristic fiascos. First, it showed its indecision, then it made an error of judgment, and, lastly, it was unable to force its decisions. In a frontier question of the year before, between Colombia and Peru, concerning the district of Leticia, the League was more fortunate. For a year Leticia was administered by League officials, and then in 1934 Colombia was granted the part which she claimed. Peru accepted this award in the Agreement of Rio-de-Janeiro.

Thus League action bears fruit only in those cases where, so to speak, the dispute settles itself.

II—THE LEAGUE SHOWS ITS INEFFICIENCY IN THE 'CONFLICT' BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN

In the case of the war between Bolivia and Paraguay, there was perhaps some real difficulty in determining the question who was the aggressor. But there could be no conceivable doubt as to Japan's position, when on 18th September, 1931,

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she loosed her offensive against the Chinese Republic. Japan was suffering from Imperialism which grew more voracious with what it fed on—in this case its earlier victories and successes, such as the annexation of Formosa, with 3,445,000 inhabitants in 1895, and that of Korea with 13,500,000 inhabitants in 1910. For twenty-five years the Empire of the Rising Sun had been waiting for the hour when the advantages in Manchuria won in 1905 after the defeat of Tsarist Russia could be pushed to completion. The Japanese are both steady workers and valiant soldiers; there are 70 millions of them, and their narrow volcanic islands cannot even provide them with the necessary foodstuffs.

Their navy is only inferior to those of the United States and of Great Britain, and even there only by a narrow margin. Their army is pre-eminent in its training and in the perfection of its modern equipment. Japan dreamed of nothing less than the unification, first, of the Far East under her lordship, and, secondly, of the whole of Asia, with possibly an attack upon the whole white world as an ultimate object. The first stage (and it was a long and difficult one) was to absorb and colonize China.

The Celestial Empire had broken up into a chaotic mass of struggling States, a fact out of which Japan made considerable profit. Tokio continually supplied arms to one or other Chinese General who was leading his province against some other province. Japan was always at the back of the perpetual civil wars of the immense land of China, and thus she was always holding up the authority of the Governments of Nankin and Canton. Peking was a dead city. Manchuria, though still nominally independent, was controlled by Japan,

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and she looked across the Great Wall towards the ancient city of the Imperial Dynasties.

By industrial infiltration and the exploitation of the South Manchurian Railway, Japan had achieved an economic conquest. But after the death of her man of straw, Marshal Tchang-Tso-Lin, the master of Mukden, his son Tchang-Hsue-Liang had turned towards the master of Nankin, Marshal Tchang-Kai-Chek. Manchuria was reincorporated with China by decree. Japanese influence in Manchuria declined, and her goods began to be boycotted.

From that moment Japan was on the lookout for any pretext on which she could intervene and make a clean sweep in Manchuria. Manchuria was to be the base from which the whole of China was to be conquered. In July, 1931, a captain of the Japanese army was killed by Chinese bandits. On 18th September followers of Tchang-Hsue-Liang exploded a bomb on the railway at Pataying or near it.

By the evening of the same day, the Japanese troops in Manchuria, who were already in marching order, were in action along with some Korean contingents. They crossed the zone of the China-Manchurian Railway near Chagchoun to Port Arthur, and seized the arsenal of Mukden. Next day in Tokio the cabinet met, and Baron Shidihara declared that the incident should be treated as a local one. But it was too late. The army had acted without the knowledge of the Government, and had decided upon rapid, brutal, and complete action.

The military party disregarded anything that the civilians of the capital might say or do, and henceforward they acted upon their own uncontrolled initiative. They had laid their

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plans to achieve and carried them out with perfect methodicalness. Battle after battle was fought, town after town occupied, and the war was carried on on a scale proportionate to the vast size of the country and of the huge population involved. Two months' fighting cost the lives of a half a million men and the destruction of thirty-four towns.

Three days after this sudden Japanese attack, China made an appeal to the League of Nations. The Chinese delegate cited the second article of the Covenant ("all war or menace of war directly concerns the whole League"), and asked for the necessary steps to be taken to preserve peace. The Council complied by inviting both parties to resume normal relations. Both China and Japan answered that it was their intention to do so, but Tokio added that the anti-Japanese agitation was the cause of all the trouble. Meantime the fighting went on. The Council meeting was summoned for 13th October. Japan declared that there was no war in Manchuria, but that a mere police operation was going on; moreover, the question was one which should be settled by direct negotiation between the two Governments. Meantime, the Japanese army was advancing steadily.

Geneva appointed a Commission to study the question. Its members were French, Italian, German, American, and British, under the chairmanship of Lord Lytton. It was to carry out its inquiries on the spot. But the escort did not arrive at Shanghai until 29th February. Much water was to run under the bridges before the Japanese navy bombarded Shanghai, while aeroplanes dropped bombs on the outlying districts. This attack was made in defiance of all negotiations and especially those which were reopened by the Council

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on 25th January, 1932, in the hope of finding some means of conciliation. It was a brutal massacre, followed by fierce fighting between the landing parties and the Chinese army which had been rushed together. Meantime the air force raided Canton and Nankin.

To gain the help of the League, the Chinese Government invoked not Article 2, but Article 10 (the members of the League undertake to maintain territorial integrity and independence), and Article 15 (the necessity of arbitration). The Chinese wished to carry the dispute to the Assembly, but on 18th February Tokio sent an ultimatum to Nankin, demanding the withdrawal of Chinese troops to a distance of 20 kilometres from the International Concession at Shanghai.

It was at this moment that the reverend Commissioners arrived in China. They took no less than nine months to plod from Shanghai to Nankin and from Mukden to Tokio, and to convince themselves of the good progress made in the accomplishment of the wicked work. Meantime on 3rd March the Extraordinary Session of the Assembly had opened, attended by the delegations of fifty States. The small States are more clear-sighted and freer of speech than the Great Powers, who are tied hand and foot by their own selfish interests, and they were more explicit than the Council, which is tarred with the same brush as the Great Powers. The Assembly ordered the combatants to cease hostilities, and recommended that negotiations should at once be opened with the aid of other Powers.

Japan gave formal obedience by withdrawing her troops from Shanghai: negotiations began. But the League's triumph on this point was purely formal, for meanwhile Japan pocketed

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the stakes. On 1st May Manchukuo (Manchuria) proclaimed its independence. Japan had conjured up from nowhere at the right place and right time, a puppet king, His Majesty Pou-Yi. He had been a nobody vegetating in obscurity since 1912, when the republican revolution had ended the old Empire. Pou-Yi, then a child, had been driven out of Peking. Tokio could have made no better choice of a representative than the last descendant of the Manchoo dynasty. On 30th September Japan signed the Agreement of Hsin King, recognizing (very willingly) the existence of the new State, which was her own creation, and its independence, which was nothing more than subordination to herself. When the Lytton Commission returned at the end of the year, it emphasized in its report the treachery and the insolence of the disguised annexation, and it condemned the pressure put by the conquerors on helpless populations. This it certainly did. But it was too late: the trick had succeeded.

China bombarded the Council with documents. They showed how premeditation by Japan was proved daily; they made it absolutely clear that Japan was the aggressor. All in vain. The word grated on sensitive ears; it was not yet current in the vernacular of Geneva. In vain Nankin showed that Japan had violated the Covenant, and that China had been true to it. A crossfire of diplomatic notes went on under the placid gaze of the Secretary-General (still Sir Eric Drummond at that time). Japan tried to justify herself by reference to the disturbed conditions in China and the Chinese hatred of 'Foreign Devils.'

China retorted by affirming that the responsibility for the existing situation rested on Japan, who opposed the consolida-

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tion of the republic so as to divide and conquer. Manchuria, she declared, is Chinese, and her people have never asked for autonomy. Violence was proved by circulars warning inhabitants that if they did not join the procession, they would be treated as lawbreakers and punished as enemies of the new State.

Against the accusation of xenophobia, she called as evidence the multilateral treaties made with European Powers. "Any durable settlement based on real consent must be compatible with the stipulations of these fundamental agreements, on which is based the whole international organization of peace." China asserted: "Peace is one and indivisible. Any weakening of confidence in the application of the principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations and of the Pact of Paris in any part of the world whatsoever, lessens the value and the efficacy of these principles everywhere." All in vain.

Not until 24th February, 1933, did the extraordinary session of the Assembly make known the solutions which were considered just. The Assembly sheltered itself behind §4 of Article 15 of the Covenant. (If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council either unanimously or by a majority vote shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.)

A compromise between Yellow and White came next, and was carried by a unanimous vote. It reproduced the conclusions of the Lytton Report, adopted a fortnight before. The compromise put the blame on Japan, but accepted the autonomy of Manchuria while acknowledging its historic subjection to China. It ordered that both Japanese and Chinese

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troops should be withdrawn from the new State, and that a special new gendarmerie should be created to replace the troops in the maintenance of internal order. It recommended the conclusion of two treaties between China and Japan, one to protect Japanese interests, the other a treaty for conciliation, arbitration, non-aggression, and mutual assistance; lastly, it recommended a commercial treaty. Special arrangements were planned for the Eastern Provinces (Inner Mongolia, comprising Jehol, Chahar, and Sousi-Yuan); China was to provide special administration for these provinces, which Japan had already in mind as her next object.

This was a most ridiculous compromise which could not conceivably satisfy anyone. The fundamental weakness of the League was lit up by the brightest limelight. Japan was offended by being treated on equal terms with her enemy, and a month after the publication of the recommendations she let it be known that she would walk out. She was condemned alike by abstract justice and by common sense, by the old law resulting from treaties and by the new rights of nations; and this Power, condemned by all alike, left the League into which she had entered of her own free will, left it with *éclat*, and thus freed herself from all international control. And the League of Nations without even setting sanctions in motion against the aggressor, leaves the attacker and the attacked alone together! Japan made good use of the chance.

Little by little she is devouring her prey. In 1933 she occupied Jehol, in 1934 Japanese infiltration into the whole of Inner Mongolia went on; like Manchukuo, this province will soon proclaim its 'independence.' In December, 1935, Japan set up an autonomous State in that part of Northern China

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which includes the Ho-Pei and the old imperial capital Peking, now called Peiping. Chantoung and Chan-Si will be taken in their turn. The Black Dragon will not relax its hold on its prey. Meantime Geneva looks on with resignation while one of the most faithful of the member-States is gradually robbed of everything.

To-day Japanese armies are the masters of Inner Mongolia and of the Chinese railway. They bar the way to Soviet influence in China. They are near the borders of Outer Mongolia which is a republic federated to the U.S.S.R. Japan and Russia were enemies in 1905; they are again face to face, and watching one another, waiting for the day when Japanese imperialism sounds the advance against the Soviet States.

The executive failure of Geneva is far more to be regretted in this instance than in the case of Bolivia and Paraguay. In the long South American conflict, the League gave proof of congenital inability to bring about peace. But in the case of China and Japan, a graver complaint exists. It is that the League acted entirely and only as a political tool in the hands of powerful States. She was the tool of Britain and her allies. Imperial Britain dislikes the growth of Japanese power in Manchuria, but she did not think it worth while to risk a war to drive Japan out of a far-away land which is not on Britain's trade routes.

She held back partly because of pressure from her Dominions. In 1922 she had denounced her treaty of alliance with Japan in order to please the United States, who were anxious about the growing influence of the Japanese navy in the Pacific. But Britain did not want to annoy her former

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friend unduly, for to-morrow, who knows? They might be friends again.

What of France and her action? She, too, thought it wiser to do nothing active, in view of her possessions in Indo-China. Why should she provoke such a formidable Power when the future is so uncertain?

How can one keep one's faith in the Covenant and in the existence of international justice?

III—BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

Japan is superior to China in many ways, and among them in this: during the World War, Japan, having become one vast munition works, provided her European allies with all manner of war material; surely, now, when the opportunity has arisen, they ought in justice to help her in the same way. Since the Armistice, they have provided 63 per cent. of the munitions of war used in the never-ending series of civil wars in ex-imperial China and Tokio has provided the rest. Now the enlargement of the war zone in the Far East is a marvellous opportunity for all the princes of death and destruction.

The United States provide raw materials—scrap iron, cotton, chemicals. Between 17th February and 23rd February, 1933, the 'Newport News' alone transported 5000 tons of nitrate of sulphur to Japan. Britain and France likewise compete with one another in the provision of material. Shanghai is becoming a vast munitions dump; in the International Concession there is a huge building constructed by Creusot, Skoda, and their subsidiaries. An English news-

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paper, the *Shanghai Post*, remarks cynically, "that a war is a real help to all branches of industry." Hamburg is the export centre for goods from France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

Here are some figures for a single week: 2nd February, 1932, two vessels left for Japan loaded with bombs, dynamite, and aeroplane parts for assemblage; 7th February, Skoda dispatched 1700 cases of munitions; 8th February, a Norwegian cargo boat took 1000 cases of explosives on board; on the same day, French firms dispatched machine guns to the value of 100 million francs.

Very many of these cargoes were shipped under false dockets. Poison gas handled actually by men in gas masks was labelled "Insecticide for the protection of plants." Munitions were packed in large crates labelled "pianos." Work in munition factories went on night and day. Britain would seem to be at the top of this trade. China's financial difficulties have made sellers very cautious, and consequently London, which has always had a large trade with Japan, exports to her four times as much as she does to China.

Official statistics mention neither aeroplanes, nor warships, nor cargo boats, nor chemicals, nor scrap iron, nor raw materials, but they do refer to millions of machine guns, of shells, of cartridges, of bombs of all sorts, of machine guns for aeroplanes . . . The Japanese bought seventy-six British ships, many for the scrap iron, others for transport, including one vessel of 45,000 tons. The official figure for British exports was £5,039,836 in 1929; it is falling year by year, but on paper only.

French statistics are even more audaciously camouflaged.

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They show no export of arms to the Far East at all. Newspapers, however, comment on the immense activity of French factories—Tokio mopped up the whole of Creusot's stock at one blow. To cope with new orders, the workers are doing hours of overtime. An officer of the Japanese General Staff has an office in the premises of Hotchkiss. Aeroplanes are being turned out by the score from Bréguet & Potez. Renault is making tanks which will be useful in Jehol.

The *New York Times* states that in the first six months of 1933 export of arms from France has gone up from 107 tons to 1017, and in value from 13,056,000 francs to 83,900,000 francs. Beside China and Japan the principal buyers are the States of South and Central America. Furthermore, neither Germany, who was still a member of the League, nor Switzerland, nor Holland, nor Belgium, nor Norway refused to take part in this business. There were some fleeting ideas at Geneva of a boycott of Japan; Britain even went further, and laid an embargo on the supply of arms to either belligerents. But it hardly lasted a day. British manufacturers soon managed to have it lifted, as no other nation came forward in support.

The moral is this. The armament and munition firms and the dealers in raw materials are certain now that they cannot be touched; in the great nations of the world it is they who direct both the political and economic life. Their branch of industry is the only one that is thriving. Meantime committees and sub-committees of the League of Nations, and British and American commissions of inquiry continue their dissertations. In January, 1936, in evidence before the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of Arms, Sir Herbert

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Lawrence, the director of Vickers, owned that he had agents who drew on the firm for drinks and delicacies. He concluded by saying without any signs of inner struggle, "the ideal of the sacredness of human life and the iniquity of war is honourable, but false."

CHAPTER II

THE ANGLO-ITALO-ABYSSINIAN CONFLICT

I—THE SOURCES OF THE DISPUTE

WE now come to the year of crisis predicted by Mussolini himself. But there can be little doubt that the Duce in making his warlike prophecies did not foresee the appearance of the British navy between Italy and her Abyssinian goal.

The Italo-Ethiopian conflict is the most tragic test to which the League, and with it the peace of Europe and of the world, has been subjected since 1919. Every imperfection inherent in the system of the League was laid bare in this episode, and these imperfections, be it noted, grow more dangerous as war travels from America to Asia, and from Asia to Europe. International policies are shattered in the collision between principles and interests; this fact appeared only too plainly in the affair of Italy and Abyssinia.

We must trace the origins of this 'conflict,' but this time let us call it by its proper name—war. For from this time onwards war threatens us all. Let us attempt to make clear the position of the two opposing powers as they appeared to the League and to the whole world in those anxious days. We shall not need to go into the deep underlying causes, nor need we take notice of pretexts.

As everyone knows, Abyssinia was the only African power that had remained independent. This was not because the

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colonizing nations had not coveted it; on the contrary, they had long cast greedy eyes upon it. In the sixteenth century the Portuguese had tried to gain a foothold in it, and the fortifications of Gondar still remain to bear witness to their occupation. Towards the end of the nineteenth century attempts at annexation were again begun. In 1867 a British expedition under Sir Robert Napier penetrated deeply into the country and shut the Emperor Theodore into the fortress of Magdala, where he committed suicide. The British shelled and destroyed the fortress. In the long run they were defeated and driven out. Britain did not reappear in those parts until twenty years later, when she obtained British Somaliland on the shores of the Red Sea from its Moslem Sultan by conquest.

About the same time, after the death of Emperor John, Abyssinia and its vassal tribes were plunged into anarchy, a state of things of which the Italians took advantage. They occupied districts in Eritrea and at the same time farther south in the Somaliland coastal region. Here the French also had just established themselves, and they transferred the capital of their small new colony from Obock to Djibuti.*

Ethiopia owed its privileged existence entirely to its geographical conformation. It is a high plateau of volcanic rock, attaining an altitude of more than 2000 metres; it is seamed with mountains, some of which rise above 5000 metres, overhanging the valleys, and almost encircling them with their abrupt cliffs and rock. It is the historic centre (Tigre,

* Under Louis-Phillippe France had established trade relations with Axoum and had always remained on good terms with Abyssinia. In 1871 a public subscription had been opened by the Abyssinians as a demonstration of sympathy and as a contribution towards the five milliard francs of war indemnity levied under the Treaty of Frankfurt.

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Choa, Amhara) of the region which is called either Abyssinia or Ethiopia indifferently, according as one makes use of the Greek derivation 'Aithiopes'—the sunburnt men—(which name Herodotus applies to the contingent in the famous list of the army of Xerxes) or as one uses the Arab derivation *Habesch*, which comes down from the Middle Ages and means 'mixture' or '*omnium gatherum*.'

Here there live the true Ethiopians, descendants of Jews who came into the country in Biblical times and intermarried with the original inhabitants. Here, too, in the fourth century of our era, Christianity according to the Coptic rite was preached, and remained dominant in the face of violent attacks from the Moslem. It is still the national religion of Ethiopia, but the greater number of people are far from being practising Christians.

During the reigns of the Emperors Theodore, John, and Menelik, the Ethiopian armies conquered the neighbouring regions lying below the plateau, Harrar, Ogaden, Kaffa, Sidamos, which are inhabited by Gallas, Somalis, and Nilotu races quite unconnected with the Ethiopian, and either Moslem or pagan in belief. The Emperor's official title was Negus Negusti, the King of Kings, and this title corresponds to the fact that he was the nominal chief of a feudal group.

The rasses, or kings of each one of the different provinces, were for long independent rulers, bound to the Negus only by a loose feudal tie. Even to-day this state of things still exists to a great extent. The authority of the central Government exists in theory rather than in practice; its decrees do not operate all over the country, and still less are the customs of all parts alike. The only general law is the *lex talionis* with

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its summary justice. The clergy are ruled by the Abouna, or Patriarch. They are all-powerful, but their influence is extremely unprogressive.

Only two attempts have been made to 'europeanize' Abyssinia and both were inaugurated by Menelik. The first was the reorganization of the army, a step which enabled him to conquer Harrar and later in 1896 to defeat the Italians at Adowa and Makale. The other was the establishment of the railway (1908) laid down and worked by a French company. This railway has about 700 kilometres of line and was intended to connect Djibuti and the coast with Addis Ababa, the new capital built to take the place of Axoum, the old political and religious centre.

Since then there has been no attempt at modernization. The country remains one of the least developed and most primitive in the world. After the death of Menelik, Ethiopia passed through many internal crises. She was governed by Lidj Yassou, grandson of the Great Negus, until he was dethroned in 1916 after he became a Mohammedan. Then the Government fell first into the hands of his aunt, the Empress Zaoditou, and next into those of Ras Taffari, who became King of Kings in 1930, under the name of Haile Selassie.

In 1870 Italy achieved unity. She then aimed at becoming a colonial Power like other great European countries. At first she considered Tunis, but in 1882 Tunis became a French protectorate. Bismarck concurred in this because he thought it good that France should have an outlet in place of her lost provinces Alsace-Lorraine. Consequently some other place in the African sun had to be found. But all the best positions were already occupied. Rome had to put up with what was

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left in East Africa—strips of the coastal plain, fringed with desert running back towards the unassailable stronghold of Abyssinian waste lands—but Italy was forced to fix her mind on them, by the drive towards expansion in relief of overpopulation. So it came about that she planted her flag in Eritrea and in Somaliland.

With Eritrea as her base, Italy succeeded in penetrating Tigre in 1891. Britain and France recognized an Italian 'zone of influence' including Tigre, Choa, Harrar, and Ogaden. Menelik, who had triumphed over the other Rasses and united Ethiopia for the moment, resisted the Italian advance. Rome replied by dispatching an expeditionary force under General Baratien. Its operations ended in disaster, with the result that Italy had to withdraw from Tigre and give up all ideas of conquest.

The Italian débacle turned to profit for Britain. Britain, who was mistress of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, obtained from Menelik a promise which has never been fulfilled to this day: an exclusive concession for all the hydraulic engineering works pertaining to the development of Lake Tana, and leave to construct a railway from British Somaliland to the Egyptian Sudan, across the territory of the Negus. All this took place at the time when France was occupied with the Madagascar Expedition and London was engaged in the Boer War.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain's policy was changing. She was suspicious of French influence in the Mediterranean, and, in consequence, she turned towards Italy. In 1906 she concluded a new agreement with Rome, and France also took part in it. Ethiopia was to be partitioned into three zones of influence. The Italian zone was the

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largest. London and Paris sanctioned her penetration of the hinterland of Somaliland and Eritrea, and her construction of a railway to connect her two colonies; these concessions covered two-thirds of Ethiopia. The Powers were counting their chickens before they were hatched. But the Treaty contained express stipulations guaranteeing the independence and territorial integrity of Ethiopia—a first-rate piece of hypocrisy. Nevertheless, they form a precedent for the share-out of colonies made later on by the League of Nations.

Ethiopia had no wish to be served up as a dish for the three Powers. From this time onwards she was continually at war with that one of the signatory Powers which was most threatening. The Emperor Lidj Yassou massed 50,000 warriors on the Eritrean frontier. Rome hastily recalled her Libyan forces and sent men and war material from home. In February, 1915, Ras Mikael made preparations for a fresh campaign. He collected an army of 150,000 men; but again the outbreak of hostilities was avoided. In 1916, when Italy was involved in the Great War, there was violent fighting on the Somaliland frontier. In 1920, 1922, and 1923 there were constant outbreaks, in which the warlike Rassas were always the aggressors.

In 1917 Taffari seized power as regent. He was more astute or more civilized than his predecessor had been, and he made overtures to the Governments of Mussolini and of Poincaré. He succeeded so well that in September, 1923, his country became a member of the League of Nations, in spite of British dissatisfaction. Count Bonino Longare stressed the importance for the League of the enlistment of distant countries. Abyssinia, he said, had hitherto been outside the

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great international movement, "but thanks to the remarkable steadfastness with which she has kept her religious faith and her national character through the ages, she has earned a title of nobility which it is only just to recognize."

It could be objected, however, that she was a slave-owning State. On this subject the French delegate, M. Jouvenel, pointed out that "it must be owned that all Governments had met with similar difficulties in their African territories; the circumstances were just the same in the French colonies, the Belgian colonies, &c." In the hope of avoiding all incidents in the future, the best thing to do was to answer at once, *Dignus es intrare*.

II—ITALY'S GRIEVANCES

Thus Ethiopia had been received into the True Church. This should have excluded the possibility of partition into zones of influence. But Heaven sometimes tempers the wind as required. The Covenant does not permit political partitions but allows economic 'zoning'! Thus two years after the ceremony at Geneva, Britain and Italy signed a new treaty. This time France did not take part.

France was busy with the pacification of Morocco, and at the same time with ferocious fighting against Abdul Krim, who is said to have used German weapons and also cast-off British equipment. It was also the time of the Damascus affair in Syria; the Druses and the Emir Feisul, who owed their arms to Vickers-Armstrong, were struggling against Sassail, who was forced to bombard Damascus. Britain was playing Italy against France in the Mediterranean.

The Treaty of 1926 was really a Partition Treaty. It just

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cut Ethiopia in two. It took no notice of French claims. Britain recognized Italy's exclusive economic rights in Eastern Ethiopia and in the region through which would run the Italian railway between Eritrea and Somaliland projected in the Treaty of 1906; Italy promised to help Britain to obtain her desired concession for the dam at Lake Tana and for a motor road from the Lake to the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan. Italy also renounced any interference with the priority of the water rights of Egypt and of the Soudan, and any attempt to set up at the sources of the Blue Nile or of its affluents any works which might divert water from the main stream to any perceptible degree.

The two Powers undertook to support one another mutually and completely in all dealings with the Regent should any difficulty arise between him and either of the two Governments.

As soon as Taffari became aware of this scheme, he addressed a strong protest to the League. Nevertheless, the relations between Rome and Addis-Ababa remained cordial to all appearance. On 2nd August, 1928, the two countries made a treaty of arbitration and friendship.

It was to be for the duration of twenty years; its main object was to establish economic collaboration. The essential clause bound the two Governments to develop and foster their trade relations. It provided—

(1) Ethiopia was granted a free zone in the port of Assab.

(2) The Italian Government received permission to construct a road suitable for traffic from Assab to Dessie, which

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is the main market of Central Abyssinia. The Regent was to continue the road to Addis Ababa.

According to Rome, all these agreements were made by the express wish of Ras Taffari, whose position was thus consolidated both internally and externally.

On the other hand, they did not touch the continual skirmishing and tension which arose from the distrust felt at Addis Ababa of all Italy's good work. Sworn friendship made no alteration in this state of things. But Mussolini actually gave Taffari 5000 Mauser rifles and a million cartridges.

In 1925 and 1926, during the Italian operations in Northern Somaliland, Ethiopia had supplied the rebels with arms and ammunition, and had afterwards given lands and pensions to their chiefs. Internally, attacks upon Italian subjects and Italian Consulates had increased, and there had been a few cases of murder. In 1931, after Ras Taffari had become the Negus Haile Selassie, came the appearance of armed Abyssinian tribesmen along the Chebeli and an attack upon the Italian frontier. This was in spite of the fact that in 1930 the new Emperor had concluded a treaty with Britain, France, and Italy at Paris. It regulated the export trade in arms which was brought under the control of the League of Nations. In 1932 Italian caravans were ambushed. In 1933 there were ten razzias with much bloodshed against protected tribes in Eritrea and Somaliland. In 1934 there were no less than seven fresh outbreaks. The two most important were the attack on the Consulate at Gondar and the attack on the outposts at Walwal. These converted the sporadic fighting into open war.

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It was the Walwal incident that led to the catastrophe. The exact line of the frontier was very uncertain and the Italians had taken advantage of this to advance seven kilometres into Ogaden. On the 5th December, 1934, suddenly without any previous discussions, the regular Abyssinian troops started a powerful offensive which threw back the Italians with heavy losses. The bloodshed on this occasion passed the limit of provocation.

The Abyssinians were possessed by a hatred of the foreigner which had constantly shown itself against the Italians for the last forty years. The Italians constituted a danger for them, but their phobia spared no one. This appeared plainly a few days later—in January, 1935—when 800 Aisaramas appeared in French Somaliland. M. Bernard, the administrative officer, who went forward with sixteen militiamen to meet them, was massacred with all his men.

III—THE APPEAL TO THE LEAGUE AND THE ACTION OF GREAT BRITAIN

This year, 1935, was the crucial time. Events came thick and fast.

At the beginning of the first half-year—when, according to Italian official documents, there had occurred a further eight raids into Eritrea and Somaliland and many anti-Italian demonstrations in the interior of Abyssinia—Rome had already decided on its course of action. On the 29th January Great Britain received an official intimation that Italy had decided to submit the Walwal incident to the League and that if she did not obtain satisfaction

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she would mobilize a preventive force in her two colonies. She did not wait for the decision of Geneva, but at once began immense works in the Port of Massarva and the construction of communications between the coast and the high plateau of Asmara to the Abyssinian frontier.

Abyssinia was alarmed. In March, in view of the continual landings of troops and war material, she demanded from the Council the inquiry and full examination prescribed in Article 15, while she awaited arbitration under the Treaty with Italy of 1928 and the Geneva Agreement of 19th January, 1935. She was given no answer.

Between the end of April and the month of July, military transports, openly using the Suez Canal, landed 100,000 men in Eritrea and Somaliland. London made no movement; the League was in no hurry to intervene. As yet it had official cognizance only of the Walwal incident.

On 3rd August the Council gave its decision. It registered the decision of both parties to submit to arbitration and required them to inform it of the result of the negotiations before the 4th September. On that date the Council would examine the dispute as a whole. The Italian representative, Baron Aloisi, abstained from voting on this second resolution—on the subject of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, the Council had only to hear the accused. A long memorandum with a photographic supplement was handed in as evidence by the accuser. Geneva was soon well-informed.

The Italian press attempted to convert world opinion to the justice of the Duce's claims. Meantime, Britain and France entered into conversations with him on means of conciliation. They sent M. Laval and Mr. Eden to confer with

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Baron Aloisi upon the possibility of finding a plan of action on the lines of the Treaty between the three Powers of 13th December, 1906. The young representative of the British Foreign Office even went to Rome, but the British proposals, even in a modified form, were drily rejected.

On 13th August the conference between the three Powers which had met again in Paris broke up, without having reached agreement upon a possible basis for discussion. From this moment there was a change of outlook. The Italo-Ethiopian dispute was thrust into the background by the quarrel between Britain and Italy. Both the British Government and British public opinion received a jar from Mussolini's resistance.

Until then, London had considered Italy as one of her supporters, almost as one of her clients. Now the new Italian fleet in the Mediterranean had grown from insignificance to be a well-armed, swift, and altogether formidable flotilla. Britain suddenly became aware that the Fascist régime had outgrown its former objectives; it would no longer be content with the rectification of frontiers, but aimed at the conquest or annexation as a colony or as a protectorate, of the whole of Abyssinia.

This was likely to be embarrassing in two ways. If Rome held the coast line and also the high plateaux, she would dominate the Red Sea, and could block the route to India, all-important to the British Empire, at will; secondly, if she held the sources of the Blue Nile, the Soudan and Egypt were at her mercy.

There was another factor which was important; it belonged to the realm of sentiment. The whole British nation was

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stirred by an irrepressible outburst of almost religious feeling for the Covenant. Now at this moment the policy of the League might be a very useful instrument to forward imperial interests; and indeed Rome seemed already to have broken faith by her refusal to submit to the sentence of Geneva.

On 22nd August, the British Premier, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, expressed the unanimous sentiment of the United Kingdom when he said: "The British Government will remain faithful to the Covenant of the League." Faster and faster the armies of Eritrea, Somaliland, and Lybia were being increased; an immense quantity of mechanical war material was being disembarked; the making of roads was being pushed on. Mussolini did not even reply to his guilty co-signatory of the Treaty of 1925. "Italy will go on, with Geneva, without Geneva, or against Geneva." On 26th August, in an interview given to the *Daily Mail*, he claimed the whole of Abyssinia, as being "necessary and sufficient for Italian expansion." On 30th August there was a sensation; news came that the Negus had conceded to Major Rickett, a British subject, the exploitation of oil in Eastern Ethiopia. This story was highly discreditable; its revelations explained the attitude of the Negus and his Ras on many points. Naturally Britain at once denied any connexion with the transaction. Her policy rested upon faith, and this must not be besmirched. She still believed that Geneva would find an acceptable solution. On 4th and 5th September, the appointed days, the question came up before the Council.

On the Walwal incident, M. Poincaré, who was a super-arbitrator and a positive specialist in definitions, reported that neither the Italian nor the Ethiopian Governments could be

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held responsible. The question of aggression did not arise, as the frontier line was by no means clear. As to the great suit which the League had called to her court, she would have been glad to get rid of it without a decision.

But the Italian memorandum with all its documents and photographs was still to hand. How the experts who compiled it must have regretted that their Duce, together with France, had brought about the League membership of "an anarchical and barbarous State." It was this anarchical and barbarous State that had been praised by Count Bonino Longare for its religious faith, its heroic courage, and its proud independence.

The Italian statement resumed the violations of territory and attacks upon individuals which had gone on far too long, and denounced the failure to execute the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1928 (of arbitration and friendship). None of the clauses had been fulfilled. On the contrary, Italy had been systematically excluded from any attempt at reorganization. Were technical men needed, Britons, Dutchmen, Americans, Swedes, Germans, Frenchmen, Belgians were brought in. Were contracts to be given out, they went to Swiss, French, and American firms. There was not a single Italian in the medical service.

The Negus had also failed to put into force the Treaty signed in Paris in 1930, between France, Britain, Italy, and Abyssinia, by which the control of the arms trade was vested in the League, in accordance with Article 23 of the Covenant.

The rest of the memorandum dealt with matters of general concern to Geneva. Slavery still existed; there were two million slaves to eight million Abyssinians. In the outlying

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regions where the central Government had no real control, the Rassas continued to trade in men, women and children. Photographs recorded the tortures and frightful mutilations inflicted. Unhappily all this was true, but war was no cure for it, and people already began to think that British influence and Mussolini's vast military preparations were bringing the Council round to the side of the small coloured State.

Baron Aloisi summarized the Italian arguments in his speech. Abyssinia's advocate was M. Gaston Jeze, Professor of Law at the University of Paris, and juristic advisor to the Negus. He replied that he could not improvise a defence against accusations which had been prepared and worked over for many weeks; but he pleaded the cause of Ethiopian independence; he declared that Abyssinia was ready to accept suggestions from the Council for spreading civilization by peaceful means, but protested against the plans of conquest of a strong State, bent on enslaving a disarmed State. "Do not, because Abyssinia is weak and her foe is strong, refuse her the effective help which is promised by the Covenant. Let it not be recorded by History that the nations whether by fear of connivance or because they were too selfish to be moved, abandoned a small State, whose very existence was at stake. Abyssinia refuses to admit that she has no resources for the defence of her territory and her life except the energy of her own despair."

Baron Aloisi left the hall before his opponent had finished speaking. He refused to enter into a discussion on a footing of equality with the Negus' representative. When M. Jeze had done, the second Italian delegate, M. Rono, got up in his turn and walked out.

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Then the wise Litvinov rose and spoke. He expressed the respect and sympathy which was felt in the U.S.S.R. for the Italian people, and then declared: "There is nothing in the Covenant which would justify us in discriminating between the members of the League of Nations on the ground of their domestic régime, of the colour of their skins, of racial difference, or of the degree of their civilisation. I wish to go so far as to say that there are other means of developing backward peoples, of altering their mode of life, of raising them to a higher level, than the method of war."

Next day, 6th September, the Council appointed a committee of five members (Britain, France, Spain, Poland, and Turkey) to study the dispute and find some peaceable solution, which, according to M. Laval, "should secure for Italy all legitimate satisfaction, without infringing the essential rights of Abyssinian sovereignty."

CHAPTER III

THE ITALO-ABYSSINIAN WAR AND THE PERIOD OF SANCTIONS

I—LONDON v. ROME

THE Committee of Five took as the basis of their efforts the British and French proposals to Italy made at the last Three-Power Conference. They were: the reorganization of Abyssinia under the auspices of the League of Nations, with the help of France, Britain, and Italy, who were her next neighbours. France and Britain were to recognize the special interests of Italy in Abyssinia.

It is clear from these proposals that Geneva did not set much store by the sovereignty of the Negus, member of the League though he might be. Whatever was prescribed, he would have to swallow. The Committee of Five, under the chairmanship of Señor de Madariaga, worked in the spirit of the Covenant; and meantime each of the three interested Powers defined its position. On 11th September, at Geneva, Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, declared that Britain was determined to remain faithful to the Covenant of the League of Nations and to the Briand-Kellog Pact. The British Government knew that Mussolini was preparing to break them both.

On 13th September M. Laval bore witness that France would keep her obligations under the Covenant while remain-

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ing a faithful friend of Italy. On the 14th, Mussolini declared in Rome that no compromise was possible in the Italian conflict with Abyssinia. Thus the negotiations were stultified in advance.

On 17th September M. Laval and Mr. Eden communicated to Baron Aloisi and Tacle Hawariate respectively the proposals of the Committee of Five, namely, the reorganization of Abyssinia under the control of the League and the cession to Italy of Ogaden only. Mussolini replied through the medium of the *Daily Mail* that he did not collect deserts. On 21st September he decided to reject the proposals: at the same time he hurried on his preparations for war.

To all this—while continuing to negotiate at Geneva and without any mandate from the League—Britain, to the general stupefaction, retorted by an unexpected act: the concentration of the Home Fleet in the Mediterranean. She did not put down her cards, but she just let her trumps peep out. Her display of naval superiority was a warning and a threat. By 21st September her forces were deployed and the route to India was covered.

On the 24th the Council received the answer of the Negus to the proposals of the Committee of Five. He received with satisfaction the promises of help from the League in the reorganization of Abyssinia and also the formal recognition of his right to dismiss any councillor in whom he had not entire confidence; but he made all reservations on the terms and conditions of application of this plan.

Feeling in Britain against Italy was increasing. It was fed from two sources: the Labour Party was ardently pro-League, and the Churches in Britain were both puritan and warlike.

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People and clergy were prepared for war with Italy if need be. Mr. Angus Watson, chairman of the Free Church Council, declared that "Great Britain cannot evade her obligations without humiliation. She must keep them at whatever cost." What a change since the bombardment of Shanghai and the annexation of Manchukuo!

In spite of his general exaltation, these facts seemed to give Mussolini an instant's pause. His rejection of the proposals of the Committee of Five is couched in terms whose moderation contrasts with the tone of the *Daily Mail* interview. Some days later, in another interview given this time to Alfred Mallet, editor of the *Petit Journal*, the Duce referred to the good old days of 1925 (when he and Baldwin worked together for the partition of Abyssinia) and contented himself with the statement: "We have the right to live, and there are forty-four millions of us crowded together in a poor country." And as an illustration of the right to live, thousands of men were to kill other thousands!

More explicitly, on 20th September Sir Eric Drummond, the British Ambassador in Rome, told Mussolini that Great Britain had no aggressive intentions toward Italy. On 1st October, at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor, the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that the Cabinet would fulfil every obligation under the Covenant, *but no more*. Article 16 had not yet been disinterred.

At Geneva things were going differently. On 26th September the Council had constituted itself a Committee of Thirteen to draw up a final report on the dispute. Everyone knew that the action which would decide their judgment was now only a question of hours. Mussolini saw at once that

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Britain was at work behind the screen of Geneva. Otherwise would she have mobilized her fleet without an international mandate? Risking everything to win everything, he deliberately took the irrevocable step.

On 3rd October Italian troops crossed the Abyssinian frontier and entered Tigre, while in Libya, and even on the borders of Agraica, divisions under General Balbo were ready for an attack on Egypt should the hastily transported British reinforcements make a move in conjunction with the Home Fleet and the aeroplanes parked near Alexandria. The tension was extreme. Maritime bases for aeroplanes had been prepared by the Italians in the Dodecanese and in Sicily. British and Italian warships were cruising in Greek waters.

The Negus withdrew his troops, which were all ready for guerilla warfare. He appealed to the League: he called for help, and asked that the aggressor should be ordered to cease hostilities, and in case of refusal, for the application of sanctions under Article 16. He would resist to the end, "he was defending not only his own existence but the sacred cause of independence of all the small States who, if this unjust aggression triumphed, would find themselves some day or other in the same position as Abyssinia, and would fall a prey to some strong, unscrupulous aggressor."

On 5th October the Council met to receive the report of the Thirteen, and adopted a recommendation that all violations of the Covenant should be brought to an end without delay. A Committee of Six was appointed to report (Britain, France, U.S.S.R., Portugal, Chile, and Denmark). Next day the six adjudged "that the Italian Government had had recourse to war contrary to their obligations under Article 12."

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On 7th October came a fresh note from the Negus, stressing the fact that none of the violations of the frontier now complained of had been brought by Italy to the notice of the Council. He answered the accusations contained in the Italian memorandum in detail, and remarked that by the very act of beginning the war, his opponent had put himself outside the law. From that time the battle of notes went on in the arena of the General Secretariat of the League.

There is one fact here which should be specially noted. For the first time since its foundation, after many violations of the Covenant had taken place, the League had actually named an aggressor, although it had not defined aggression. She had handled Bolivia and Japan gently, but she excommunicated Italy? Why? Precisely because the policy of the aggressor was applied in a part of the world in which it seemed dangerous to the British Empire. Britain dominates Geneva, thanks to the recent union of the spirit of the League with the puritan spirit, and also to the majority of the small nations, which nearly always act with Britain.

In every nation there is to-day a sort of religious passion at work, which sets one side against the other fanatically. It is a terrible, a moving phenomenon. In the sixteenth century Protestants and Catholics killed one another, and so to-day Fascists and anti-Fascists are ready to fly at each other's throats.

Let there be no doubt; I hold Mussolini's madness to be without excuse. He has committed the unpardonable sin; he has let loose all the Furies who attend on collective murder. Whatever the reasons for his action, though they may explain it, they cannot excuse it.

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Mussolini has the soul of a *condottiere*. He has learned from his French master, Georges Sorel, the creed that violence is the only creative agent. For fifteen years he has preached the virtues of war to a people who had visions of colonial expansion. Some outlet was imperative for all this enthusiasm. Why should Mussolini and his people not conceive that like the French and the British they, too, have the right to expand and to carry Roman 'civilization' into Africa?

Why not? One glance at the map of the Dark Continent could have told them why. No place was unoccupied. Other nations have carried their arms from Egypt, Tunis, and Morocco to the Cape of Good Hope. They have conquered empires in Asia. Why should not Italy in her turn make a colonial expedition? Did the League, does the League now, interfere to prevent Japan from devouring China? Why should she act more severely against a great white nation than against a yellow one? If Britain does perchance offer military opposition with her out-of-date fleet and even her air force, Italy has her army, and her air marshals, and her new cruisers, her submarines, and her mine sweepers; a whole arsenal of torpedoes.

II—ARTICLE 16 AND SANCTIONS

The machinery was now set in motion against the aggressor. Geneva was urged on by the new faith in the Right and the Justice—which looks very different from the other side. The League entered deliberately on the unexplored path. On 7th October the Council unanimously adopted the report of the Committee of Six. On the 8th it decided that,

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in accordance with Article 16 of the Covenant, sanctions should be applied to the aggressor.

The decision had next to be ratified by the Assembly. It met on the 10th. Fifty-one members were present; only three—Austria, Hungary, and Albania—voted against the majority. Amongst others Switzerland assented in principle while making reservations as to its application; she has always maintained her own point of view, even though she gives hospitality to the League of Nations. Then and there it was decided that economic and financial sanctions should be applied. Military sanctions did not come in question, simply because it was supposed that the others would be sufficiently effective; also, it was hard to see how to compose an international police force, in spite of the premature zeal with which Britain had mobilized her fleet.

It was in vain that Baron Aloisi pointed out that in the Far East, when war between two original members was actually going on, it had taken the League seventeen months of delay and inquiries to find cover behind Article 15, whereas now it used Article 16 as a weapon. In the case of the Chaco it took two years and ended by letting things be. Why in the case of Italy was the hue and cry raised and the decision taken in a month? Publicly, he expressed surprise at the "opportunistic policy of two weights and two measures," and denounced "the danger of the letter, a synonym for death, opposing the spirit, the synonym of life." This criticism would have had more force if it had not been delivered in defence of a murderous aggression.

On 12th October throughout the kingdom which is the gilded cage of the House of Savoy, the national Fascist

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mobilization took place—a theatrical *levée en masse* of the people who had fed the master's pride for years. Every creature that had a black shirt was there: twenty million men and women, the whole population in arms, sworn to conquer or die. They were hypnotized by Africa. Not one of them thought of the Brenner; the last manœuvres among the mountains were brought to an end, and the number of troops guarding the frontier was reduced.

On 19th October the Assembly accepted the proposals of the Committee of Eighteen (the boycott of Italy, and the assent of the States concerned), and adjourned until 31st October to decide upon the date of application of sanctions. Doubtless there were hopes that the threat of sanctions would be enough to procure a renewal of negotiations; such hopes were based on a very false estimate of Mussolini's attitude in the first flush of success. Adowa had been recaptured, and a monument to those who fell in 1896 was already being set up. The monolith had been brought from Rome; its immediate erection spoke plainly enough of Italian confidence and certainty of victory. Axoum had been occupied; it was the Holy City, the ancient capital where the King of Kings had been crowned.

All this meant that Britain's stock was falling. One reason why she had shown such zeal for sanctions was that the elections were at hand, and the Government had to play against the Labour Opposition. By fifteen votes to one, the British demanded the most rigorous application of the Covenant. Workers and clergymen alike were ready to face the worst, so as to get something better. The Archbishop of York was inspired to say: "Another war, great and terrible though

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it would be, may be necessary to re-establish the authority of the League of Nations." At the Albert Hall, Lord Robert Cecil, himself the promoter of a Peace ballot, recommended "a combined action of the British and French fleets to cut the Italian communications with East Africa."

Less explicitly Mr. Baldwin at public meetings seemed to be facing both ways. From one point of view he had a wider outlook than from the other. The old Conservative was anxious about future possibilities. On 28th October at an election meeting he said: "It would be the most bitter irony in history if the League, in its efforts to keep the peace in one part of the globe, should only succeed in setting fire to the whole world." On the 31st, at the London meeting of the International Peace Society, he made the contrary declaration that he favoured a policy of collective security through the League of Nations.

In point of fact, as early as 10th October in spite of Sir Samuel Hoare's careful public statement that Britain had no hostility either to Italy nor against the Fascist régime, London had inquired of Paris whether she could count on French military, naval, and air support in case of an attack upon the Home Fleet by Italy. Notes had been exchanged. If France were attacked by Germany, would Britain give her support in like manner? Britain's answer must depend upon the circumstances. This reply would not seem to advance matters much: nevertheless, on the 18th M. Laval, who like the British ministers wished to remain within the framework of the Covenant of the League, had loyally assured the Foreign Office of his wholehearted support. Immediately conversations

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between naval general staffs began and were extended to include the armies and the air forces of the two countries.

These events bring out another aspect of the League vote on the principle of sanctions. It was generally felt that the measures against Italy constituted not only a fulfilment of the letter of the Covenant, but a precautionary measure against any other act of aggression. It was a dress rehearsal. Rome was the understudy for Berlin.

On 2nd November, while the Italian bombers were hard at work, and the 300,000 men, both Italian and native, in Eritrea and Somaliland were advancing in Tigre and Ogaden, with fleets of tanks and armoured cars, the Assembly decided that financial and economic sanctions should be applied as from 18th November. In the interval the British elections had taken place, the Labour Party had gained thirty-eight seats, but the Conservative Cabinet had a majority large enough to free Mr. Baldwin's hands. He was now inclined towards conciliation, although his Cabinet was divided in opinion. Mr. Eden regarded sanctions as his trump card against the Duce, who had refused even to listen to him. On the other side, Sir Samuel Hoare and Pierre Laval believed in continued negotiations as much as in fidelity to the Covenant. The Belgian Premier, M. van Zeeland, caused the Council to confide to them the task of finding a peaceable solution within the framework of the League. For the present, petrol and coal were excluded from the list of raw materials covered by sanctions. So also were iron and steel. But the list of prohibited goods was a long one, ranging from gas to motor cars, and not forgetting camels.

Britain seemed less thoroughgoing than France in her

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public interpretation of the difficult twofold commission, to be stern and yet to be kind. Nevertheless she agreed to the French proposal that the Committee of Eighteen which was examining the eventual extension of sanctions to petrol should adjourn from the 25th till the 29th. But Mussolini was not to be caught. He had faith in his cause, in his conquering armies, in the three divisions on the Libyan frontier ready for action if Britain went too far. He counted on the effect of the 125 millions allotted to buying over the enemy. But the power of St. George had taken up the task of barring his way.

I should not be surprised if the British Intelligence Service had played the Ethiopian King against the Italian Knave. In Rome a diplomat said to a British colleague: "What has happened is that you have lured Italy into a mouse trap." He replied: "No, but we have shut the trap door."

The outrage of sanctions stiffened Mussolini's attitude. The day of their application was kept as a national holiday, and all Italy was beflagged. Severe restrictions were imposed on meat, coal, petrol, and electricity. Important steps were taken, such as the suppression of land workers' leave. This was expected to bring back 100,000 men to the land.

Britain was alarmed at the growth of risk of war. She asked Paris to give Rome the assurance of Anglo-French solidarity; by implication, this was to recognize the end of Locarno.

III—THE HOARE-LAVAL PLAN, AND THE REVOLT OF PUBLIC OPINION

M. Laval and Sir Samuel Hoare were patiently trying to

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work out an acceptable compromise with the aid of their experts. Mussolini was doing his best to make this impossible. On 7th December he declared in the Italian Chamber: "The death sentence by economic suffocation pronounced by the humane judges of Geneva has never been applied before 1935; probably it will never be employed again; it is directed against Italy to-day because she is poor in raw materials, whereas rich nations are sheltered from penalties from Geneva." Speeches such as this did not help.

On the 9th the British Cabinet examined the outlines of the Hoare-Laval Plan, which was endorsed by Paris. The opposition to Sir Samuel Hoare within the Cabinet was led by Mr. Eden. The plan proposed the cession by Abyssinia of Eastern Tigre except Axoum, of a part of Ogaden, and the grant of large zone for colonization and economic development in South Abyssinia. Existing rights and possessions of natives and foreign nationals were reserved, but otherwise Italy would have the sole right of organization and exploitation in the interests of the whole population. In return Ethiopia would get an outlet in Eritrea, the port of Assab on the Red Sea.

This offer was much greater than that made in August by the Three-Power Conference in Paris. But compared with the dreams of 1925, it was much less than Mussolini hoped to get, now that Makale had just fallen and his troops were advancing in Ogaden. Such as it was, the plan had been made without any reference to the Negus, who was to foot the bill. It was to be submitted to the two opponents and to the League. As soon as it became known, it aroused a storm of disapprobation that was almost world-wide.

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Both in France and in Britain, anti-sanctionists welcomed the plan, but the vast mass of sanctionists were outraged by this 'bonus on aggression.' In strict justice, to reward violence in this way was equivalent to the abdication of all moral judgment. No one who felt sincerely and generously could be other than deeply shocked, and it was the duty of such people to protest as loudly as they could.

In the special circumstances M. Laval and Sir Samuel Hoare doubtless intended to cut their losses, and check the fire while they could, in the supreme interests of peace; but by such a policy they encouraged any possible aggressor to think that he could go ahead with the certainty of making a profit.

The worst of it was, that in the existing condition of the League the sanctions which public opinion demanded could not be applied with the necessary speed and unanimity. In Britain the whole Labour Party and in France the *Rassemblement Populaire* believed firmly that if they succeeded in punishing the aggressor, they would secure a stable peace once and for all. They held dogmatically to the idea that justice was identified with the League, but the League as they thought of it was a heavenly body with no real existence save in their own hope and faith. When Fascism had been properly punished and Mussolini subdued, then Hitler's Nazi dictatorship would be nearing its end.

They were thinking in unreal terms, mistaking the League for the Temple of Justice, whereas in reality it was the Temple of Bargaining. As long as the States do not nationalize their banks and their armament industry—the first step towards disarmament—as long as international solidarity is an unrealized hope, as long as the League has no compensation fund for use

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in an economic blockade, so that the citizens of an honest State do not suffer for those who are not honest, so long will sanctions be a double-edged weapon, dealing peace, dealing war.

At the date which we have now reached, in Paris, London, in the whole League, an outcry was raised against the Hoare-Laval Plan. It was communicated to the interested parties, and the Negus at once rejected it, with most justifiable indignation and irony. The Council and the Assembly both made protests. Mussolini, led astray by his demon, loaded it with mockery even before he had given his answer. I refer to his speech at Pontinia. He abused the system of sanctions: "the most unjust economic siege in history," characterized the war as "a war of the poor, the disinherited, the proletarians against the selfish and the hypocritical," he swore that where the Italian flag had once been hoisted it should never be hauled down. The official answer was to be given two days later by the Fascist Council; what it would be thus became common knowledge.

In Britain Sir Samuel Hoare resigned. Some of his colleagues were against him, and the whole of British public opinion was in revolt. The two statesmen had made a false step; their attempt to save the cause of peace had made peace itself much less stable, and had also endangered the authority of the League.

At Geneva the atmosphere was more electric than even in London and Paris. M. Laval presented the ill-fated plan first to the Committee of Eighteen, and then to the Council. It was easy for Mr. Eden to damn it, with a very sympathetic audience; he had always disapproved of it. The Abyssinian

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delegate demanded an unqualified rejection, pointing out the danger to all member-States of such a precedent. He was supported by M. Potemkin for the Soviets, M. Munch for the Scandinavian countries, M. Antoniadé for Roumania, Rüstüm Aras for Turkey, and others.

Thus there was almost unanimity against the 'bonus on aggression.' It was caused not only by the feeling in the European States which arose after the German defeat, the determination never to reopen the question of their hard-won frontiers; not only by a coalition of interests guided visibly by the influence of Britain; nor by the self-interest of the small nations who all feared, quite justifiably, that the League might become a means to a repartition of territory under the influence and in the interest of the Great Powers. There was more than all these in the general outcry against the war that pays, and it is a consolation to recognize that it was so. There was a new, obscure feeling among all the organized populations—a hope, a *determination* to outlaw war more effectually than by diplomatic 'scraps of paper' and the weak intention of Pacts.

IV—FACTORS UNDERLYING THE RETREAT

The demonstration at Geneva had no effect upon the fate of the ministries in London and in Paris. Each kept its majorities in the House of Commons and in the French Chamber. The members felt that there was a risk, if not a positive danger, in becoming identified with the extreme sanctionist position. In the speech in which Sir Samuel Hoare explained his resignation, he had shown the urgency of the anxiety under which he laboured when he was elaborating and presenting the plan. "The conversations of Paris began

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in an atmosphere of imminent war: the fear of hostilities between Britain and Italy, the fear of a general conflagration in Europe." The situation "could only develop in one way."

Mr. Baldwin had accepted the Hoare-Laval Plan, and had then thrown the Foreign Secretary overboard. He pleaded guilty and obtained a majority of 225 votes. In the course of the debate he made this curious remark: "If I could reveal to you the real condition of the British navy, there is not one of you in this House who would blame my conduct." There was more than one meaning behind these mysterious words.

As early as 19th September—as if Great Britain had then determined to run the risk of a war single-handed against Italy, with which the dispatch of the Home Fleet to the Mediterranean without a League mandate is consonant—London had made a move on her own authority. She had sounded the Mediterranean Powers, and even Russia, far away as she was.

The Foreign Office had asked if their Governments would give the mutual assistance prescribed by section 3 of Article 16 in case of an attack upon the British fleet; and further, what military and naval measures they had taken in view of the difficulties which might arise from the application of sanctions. The French Government was the only one to take its stand definitely on the side of Britain. This it did on 18th October, while continuing to negotiate for conciliation; Jugoslavia and Greece, both Anglophile Powers, had promised their support; the two other Mediterranean Powers had shown no enthusiasm. Spain had not definitely said No, but her Yes was unconvincing. Turkey accepted, but with a reservation which was as good as a refusal, since her condition was

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a partial revision of the treaties, namely, the right to fortify the Narrows. This was a blow to collective security.

There were two other equally weighty reasons for Baldwin's acceptance of the Hoare-Laval Plan. Egypt, which kept the gates of the Suez Canal and held the outlet of the Blue Nile, had been in a state of wild agitation since the end of November. She was weary of being treated as a conquered country and wild with regret that she had not obtained a hearing in 1919, when her apostle of liberty, Zaghloul Pasha, had asked for her admission to the League of Nations. Now, under Zaghloul's successor, Mohammed Nahas Pasha, the leader of the Whafdist movement, noisy students were demanding in the name of their country that Geneva should hear her this time. Rioting and loss of life went on in Cairo and it seemed possible that the British police might be swamped.

Beside the fear of seeing Italian troops established by the Red Sea, there were other subjects for grave reflection; India was not wholly loyal, in China the war with Japan was doing harm to British interests, some of the Dominions were against a war arising from sanctions . . . The Cabinet's decision was certainly influenced by two shadowy uneasy incubi: the possibility of a movement among the African races which might lead to an embittered racial war between Black and White, and who could tell what the issue would be? Secondly, the threat involved in the rearmament of the Third Reich, and the uncertainty of Hitler's intentions.

An inspired article in the *Morning Post* helped to explain Mr. Baldwin's dark saying in the House of Commons. Doubtless, with an intention of justifying the approaching increase in the expenditure on armaments which Britain like other

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nations now found necessary, the London paper thought it permissible to say that the supplies of munitions had fallen so low that the vessels in the Mediterranean had a bare minimum, that the Navy was insufficiently manned; that the existing fleet would not be able to secure the food supplies of London in time of war, and that the number of cruisers and torpedo-boat destroyers had fallen below the margin of safety.

If these statements are true, it is amazing that the British Cabinet did not pause before they started their dangerous gamble with the dispatch of the Home Fleet to the Mediterranean. Unless, indeed, these statements, which were too sensational not to have been carefully considered, were themselves part of the game. Mussolini had given full reassurances as to British interests on Lake Tana and the Blue Nile. An arrangement might easily have been made with him to secure the route to India. But it would have been far better for Britain, for the League, for the peace of the world, to find a solution in concert with the former friend of 1925, to which the Negus would have agreed. In such a way the terrible war, which is still going on, would have been avoided, together with evil consequences which may yet arise from it.

I have made public my opinion of murderous 'colonial expeditions,' and of the true title to independence of nations, of all nations. I shall not therefore be misunderstood when I say that Abyssinia herself could only have gained by a friendly settlement which would have enriched the country and left the Negus on his golden throne. To pay for all the equipment and armament she needs, and obtains, now that the embargo against her is lifted, from nations who are more greedy than just, would finally eat her up. She would have to part with

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her soil and even her subsoil. The Ras will go, and the great industrial firms will reign. Already the Japanese have installed a Legation in place of the Italian Legation at Addis Ababa.

The misfortune may be irreparable. Originally caused by the clash of British and Italian interests, it might have been avoided if the British Cabinet had not acted so hastily, and if at the same time a psychological factor had not come into play in London as in Paris and at Geneva. The situation was sufficiently involved without that. To the Labour Party, and to most of the manual and intellectual workers in France, sanctions seemed justified by their purpose—the defeat of Fascism, and the preservation of peace by the enforcement of sovereign justice.

Sovereign Justice! The day will come, when justice rules, of a certainty; but I can assure my readers that it will not come until the representatives of the people have created an Association of Peoples on the ruins of the League of Nations—ruins which betoken how powerless it was for good. In such an Association, men will receive a hearing and be heard with understanding, whether they be black, white, or yellow, as soon as they become conscious of their own human dignity and of the solidarity of all mankind.

In Paris, on 27th-28th December, there was a political crisis. The opponents of the Laval Ministry were trying to bring about its fall. I have said elsewhere what I think of the decrees which took everything from the poor and nothing from the rich, at a time when the cost of living remained high, and of the armed political leagues which were smiled on by the public authorities. I shall abstain from any consideration of France's internal politics here. My theme is the part

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played by France in the League, and by the League in Europe; and I shall keep to it only.

The French Premier made a speech which was so trenchant that if it did not convert his opponents it won him a majority. This was made up of various groups, but it sufficed. I recognize in it the fine principles of Briand, fidelity to the Covenant, combined with the use of conciliation whenever it could prevent or put an end to war.

M. Laval should certainly have advised Italy against the 'colonial expedition' against a fellow-member of the League, which she was planning as early as January, 1935. He should have done this to secure the watch on the Brenner. He was guilty here. He was also guilty of going much too far in the Hoare-Laval Plan. But, on the other hand, he was so peace-minded that after the signature of the Franco-Soviet Pact, he initiated direct conversations with Germany, with the aim of bringing France and Germany together within the framework of the League. In so doing he marked a new tendency which is assuredly to his honour.

V—A FUTILE MANŒUVRE

In Abyssinia the fighting went on, but less vigorously. In Italy the war was becoming less popular, in spite of official enthusiasm and symbolic acts, such as the collection of gold begun at the ceremony on the Capitol, in front of the national War Memorial. The Queen of Italy was the first to offer her wedding ring to the State. Commemorative medals, the wedding rings of the poor, family jewels, all went to swell the vast stream of armaments.

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At the seat of war, the triumphant rush of the first days was now checked by the immense difficulties of the commissariat, of the climate alternating between extreme heat and heavy rain, and of the difficult mountainous country. Things went more slowly. News from the one side often contradicted the news from the other, and this makes it hard to arrive at the truth. But it would seem that the Abyssinian tactics and pertinacious guerilla fighting, shown in many fierce hand-to-hand struggles, did for a short time neutralize the advantage of the tanks and armoured cars.

The greatest part in the attack was played by the Italian aeroplanes, which on every possible occasion bombed the Abyssinian troops, however scattered or skilfully covered they might be. Their exploits were very costly and did little damage, whereas some of them succeeded in exciting the indignation of the whole world. First, a Swedish ambulance was hit, then an Egyptian ambulance, then a British one.

Prince Charles of Sweden protested against "this revolting act." In Stockholm there were demonstrations against the Italian Legation and the Swedish Government made an energetic protest in Rome. The Italian answer was that the acts complained of were reprisals for atrocities committed on Italian prisoners. Mussolini protested to the League against Abyssinian ruses of marking the shelters of troops with the Red Cross.

Such controversies are as old as war itself and the framing of laws of war. Wonderful progress has been made in the new art of killing, and we can no more humanize murder than we can limit the duration of war. The time of steel gloves and plumed helmet has gone. Destruction striking

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blindly in the most horrible ways and on the largest possible scale—this is modern war, and on these lines it will progress. People should realize this before, not after.

Even by the end of December there still seemed a chance of a return to reason. Mussolini declared he would examine any new arbitration proposal. In other words, he now began to feel what a huge task he had undertaken. People were beginning to use free speech once more, and the existing discontent was becoming clear. In spite of barbed wire, hundreds (some say thousands) of deserters crossed the frontier into the Tyrol. On 3rd January, 1936, a mutiny broke out at Turin in a regiment of Alpini under orders for Abyssinia. In any case the war might be a long one. Sanctions had not proved so immediately effective as had been hoped. Their effect was to impoverish Italy and so to limit to some extent her chances of a complete victory, but at the same time they caused grave disturbances in the foreign trade of most countries, which were already suffering under the crisis.

To compensate Yugoslavia for her losses, London suspended the British tariff upon her products. France applied the sanctions in the strictest possible sense and suffered much thereby. Uneasiness was increasing everywhere. But in every country fraudulent traders managed to carry on their trade with Italy. To make sanctions really effective, the world needed to be ruled by the motives of justice, not by the all-powerful influence of money-making.

The effect of the punitive measures was ruined from the start by the refusal of Albania, Austria, and Hungary to lay on sanctions, and by the evasions of Switzerland. As soon as these measures were heard of, before they were applied, all

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exporters of goods to Rome dispatched all possible stocks forthwith. Belgium sent coal; Roumania and Russia sent petrol; Germany never ceased to send synthetic motor spirit, steel, and coal. Anyone who could dodge sanctions did so. An order for aeroplane engines was formally refused by a French firm and was accepted by a British firm for dispatch via Switzerland. An official German note to the British Government revealed that unassembled pieces of French make had arrived at Hamburg from England *en route* to Italy. The contraband trade spurred in anticipation of what the United States would do.

On 4th January President Roosevelt made a great speech, just before the meeting of Congress at Washington to decide the conditions of American neutrality. The principle of neutrality had been decreed some time before. Wilson's successor confirmed the embargo on the dispatch of armaments to the two belligerents; he delivered a homily in praise of democracies (which nevertheless are as much capable of making war as any other form of government), and an attack on dictatorships. Then he settled himself comfortably in his arm-chair to look on.

Aggressors, attacked: all were henceforth to be treated alike. Mr. Roosevelt made some faint show of reserving the decision in certain cases to himself. But his speech was not final: in the last resort Congress decided whether the neutrality was henceforward to be absolute or relative. Trade in raw materials necessary for the continuation of the war (petrol being the most important) was permitted, provided it did not exceed the average of the preceding years. The only restriction on this trade was that it was not protected by the American

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flag; but traders must export at their own risk. This would give Britain the right to take prizes, if she pursued her mission as the champion of sanctions.

But now Britain seemed less eager to secure the efficacy of the sanctions to which she had been the first convert. Her attention was drawn off to the violent Nazi propaganda in Danzig. The ninetieth session of the Council opened on 20th January, and by that date a significant speech by Mr. Eden at Warwick on 17th January had made it clear that the extension of sanctions to raw materials and especially petrol had been relegated to the background.

According to the new Foreign Secretary, the outstanding features of 1935 were the threat involved in the rearmament of Germany and the first attempt at collective security. The hymn which he intoned in honour of this latter was almost the same as the lyrics of Sir Samuel Hoare. Collective security was the law of the future, the only means to persuade the aggressor that negotiation is better than war, for war should never pay. (This is quite true.) A note of disillusionment as well: International solidarity must be shown not only in words but also in deeds, if the League was to fulfil its mission. To do so, it needed to gain strength and also elasticity which it could only obtain by general consent "from the necessary changes when the moment should be judged propitious."

It is perhaps somewhat surprising to see the British reformist thesis being analogous with the conclusion of Baron Aloisi's last harangue when he inveighed against the Two Weights and the Two Measures. However, nobody at Geneva seemed surprised—while they waited for the advent of the future force, and the future elasticity—that the Council turned

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itself into a Committee of Thirteen in order to decide that Ethiopia should be refused all financial aid despite its supplications; and that no Commission of Inquiry should be sent to judge the conduct of the war on the spot. It was now up to the Duce to make his suggestions known.

The Council of Fifty-three handed the matter over to the Committee of Eighteen, who finally decided to convene, after a fortnight's pause, a Committee of Experts to work out what length of time would have to expire before the sanction on petrol could be effectively applied.

The Committee in its turn divided itself into two sub-committees; the one, having concluded its studies, gravely came to the conclusion that, thanks to previous stocks, Italy had sufficient petrol for six to eight months, and that at least three months and a blockade preventing the traffic of tankers would be necessary before the application of the sanction became effective. The other declared that by commandeering factories a country at war could, thanks to special machinery, manufacture substitutes. The test had been made. Good-bye, Sanctions!

The real motive of the Anglo-Genevan change of tack was not only that of being able to wait for the decision of the Congress at Washington and the promulgation of the Neutrality Act which, as one knows, did not suspend all delivery of the essential fuel; it was, if we may believe the diplomatic correspondent of the *Œuvre*, Mme. Geneviève Tabouis, who is generally well informed, also in part to allow Britain not to apply the strongest sanction of all except *in extremis*, that is, at a time when it will have no practical

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bearing, and to create a precedent which is indispensable to the future of the collective security of the world (*sic*).

Could there be a clearer proof of the folly of producing sanctions suddenly out of Article 16, like a rabbit out of a hat?

The inharmonious orchestra at Geneva had played a tune to no purpose. The dress-rehearsal of the precedent had produced none of the results expected. But one result it had produced; Germany was warned; the British Government had let her know that it was now converted to collective security; consequently, if Berlin wished to escape the application of sanctions in future, she would be compelled to resume her place among the Geneva Powers.

Having sounded this warning, the Council turned to the matters which were most on its mind and, first, the proceedings against the Nazis in Danzig. In response to Mr. Eden's charge, the Nazi President of the Senate promised to be good. Next came the case arising from the rupture of diplomatic relations between Uruguay and the U.S.S.R. M. Litvinov showed that the accusation of Communist intrigues at Montevideo and in Brazil did not rest upon any evidence; an arbitration commission of three confirmed his view; the two disputants were asked to make friends, and both declared themselves satisfied.

The end of this session was marked by a relaxation of tension. The death of George V and the accession of Edward VIII gave it a slight tinge of court mourning, but 'the King is dead, long live the King!' We need only mention the British and Italian Notes to end the affair. Memoranda were exchanged without result. Britain took her stand on an

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Article of the Covenant to justify her consultation of the Mediterranean Powers in case of an Italian attack on the Home Fleet. Italy retorted that nothing in the Covenant justified the mobilization of the fleet, and that Rome had never intended to cause any difficulties in Europe when she undertook her colonial expedition.

Nevertheless, the horizon was not clear. No real tranquillity was possible without a peaceable solution of the conflict between Italy, Britain, and Abyssinia, for only this could do away with the menace of a possible *rapprochement* between the Duce and the Führer. The war of 1914 developed from Balkan wars, but it is too often forgotten that the first spark was kindled in Morocco.

From this time the Italo-Abyssinian war, terrible as it was, was only a side-show. The just principle of Abyssinian independence, and the brave tribesmen with their savage patriotism, the no less brave Italian soldiers—the *mêlée* of “the poor, the disinherited, the proletarians” slaughtering one another for the mercilessness of statesmen—these must all look after themselves. The League of Nations could not prevent and could not arrest the ‘conflict,’ and has left it to the uncertain ‘judgment of God.’

The British Government has decided that it is better, in the interest of the future, not to drive Italy to desperation in her present excited state. Also not to encourage the oppressed races too far in their hopes and their resentment. There is not to be a United Front for Colonial Revolution. After all, if what remained of the Stresa Front could only be reformed, it would “be well worth a mass” in the international temple, rebuilt for the grand occasion.

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How grand the occasion turns out, whether it be war or peace, means rebirth or death for the League of Nations. France is the only one of the leading Powers which has once again changed its representative. The Laval Ministry fell to pieces without being outvoted and M. Laval resigned on 22nd January. His Government was succeeded by a new cabinet mixture, the Sarraut-Flandin Ministry. This Ministry has reverted to the strict tradition of Poincaré; that is, the League *versus* Germany. We have gone back to the Protocol of 1924, but this time with the support of Britain. The last word is with the U.S.S.R., and since her entry into the League she has always stood for moderation and justice and faithful service to peace.

I have reached the end of the story. All that remains to do is to analyse the balance sheet of the League's history, both on the debit and the credit sides. We must examine it from the early stages to the last unhappy phase. We must search the dark horizon to find some quarter, from which in these wretched times of ours, there may come mercy or perhaps even salvation.

PART V
BALANCE SHEET

CHAPTER I

CREDIT

THE severest critic of the blunders inherent in every human experiment tried for the first time could not, on a general review of the record of the League of Nations, fail to acknowledge that it has results to its credit, many of them of considerable importance.

I—POLITICAL

In 1922, successfully fulfilling the rôle of arbiter which had devolved upon it, the League settled the Græco-Bulgarian dispute, in 1923 the Italo-Greek, and in 1928 the first quarrel between Bolivia and Paraguay. It solved the problems of the Aland Islands and of Upper Silesia to the satisfaction of both parties in each case. It likewise undertook, with excellent results, the administration of Danzig and the Saar, including in the latter instance the regulation of the plebiscite and the retrocession of the territory to Germany. Similarly Geneva discharged humanely the duty of guarding the treaty and other rights of minorities with which it was entrusted in 1920. It was an intricate task, involving the protection of rights relative to nationality, livelihood, individual and religious liberty, the civil and political equality before the law of all persons within its jurisdiction, and, lastly, the use of minority languages. Thus out of 350 petitions presented on behalf of minorities one-half were accepted by the Council as well founded and satisfaction was obtained from the Governments

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concerned. Among the matters so dealt with were the position of the Jews in Hungary, the distribution of the indemnity to the Hungarian settlers in the Banat and Transylvania, and Ruthenian autonomy. In some cases considerable financial interests were involved, as in Poland where 2,700,000 zloty (gold francs) were distributed among 500 peasants.

II—FINANCIAL

Certain countries that had been doomed to misery were set up again, such as Austria, which was assisted by the League in 1922-23. In 1924-26 the League helped to put Hungary, Bulgaria, and Greece on their feet. It organized two loans, one for the Free City of Danzig, the other for the carrying out of currency and banking reform in Esthonia.

III—HUMANITARIAN

Here work has been carried on, in intention at least, in conformity with the programme outlined in Article 23—the securing and maintenance of fair and humane working conditions for man, woman, and child; the suppression of the white slave traffic and the drug traffic; the fight against sickness and epidemics, and in general the amelioration of human life. Geneva has made it its business to solve the problems of suffering that are the legacy of the war.

In every country the frightful upheaval had left a disorganization that was bound to last for years, and would have lasted longer than it did but for the intervention of the League with its resources and the moral authority which it commanded at the opening of its career. In 1920 half a million

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soldiers in Europe and Asia were still waiting to be restored to health and home. More than half of them were Austrians, Hungarians, and Germans in Russian and Siberian prison camps. Fever, famine, and filth were turning them into worn-out brute beasts. In Siberia in one year alone 120,000 died.

The League Council took their repatriation in hand and entrusted the work of directing it to Dr. Nansen, the famous Norwegian explorer, who had become one of Geneva's most valued auxiliaries. The results of his generous zeal were not long in being seen. In six months 100,000 and in a year 350,000 prisoners returned to their native countries. By the end of two years the rescue work had been completed.

The repatriation of refugees was a task of even greater difficulty. Foreign wars and civil wars had combined to send innumerable unhappy creatures into exile—Russians who had fled from the Soviet revolution and populations of the late Ottoman Empire, wandering abroad hither and thither, to whom nobody would give a home. In all there were more than four million of these exiles.

Nansen, the high-priest of humanity, redoubled his efforts. He established refugee services in every European capital. Thanks to him, thousands found work in the towns of Central Europe, and tens of thousands were fed and assisted through his care.

The Greeks who had fled from Turkey alone numbered a million and a half. The Hellenic Government could never have provided for them without the help of the League of Nations, which sought and found means of transport, stores of food, and the necessary supplies for fitting out camps.

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Epidemics were warded off by a vaccination campaign directed by the hygiene organization of the League. All this necessarily cost a great deal of money, but Geneva was able to find it—an international loan of £9,100,000 guaranteed by the Hellenic Government. It was not so much a work of charity as of restoration. These crowds were sorted out and classified by occupation, and for the agricultural classes a system of provincial land settlement was organized. Whole regions of Macedonia were reclaimed from marshland. Building materials, land, livestock, seed, implements, and vehicles were supplied. Sturdy communities grew up; agricultural co-operation began to develop; schools were built. Some 550,000 vaccinations were carried out in the interests of public health.

A similar work was carried out on behalf of the Bulgarian refugees, a loan of £2,500,000 being raised and 300,000 fugitives resettled in the agricultural districts of their country.

The problem of the Armenian refugees was more complicated. Where was a home to be found for them? The U.S.S.R. did not in those days recognize Geneva. French Syria was able to take 90,000. By the end of 1920 out of the whole body of these unfortunates only 180,000 had not found some work. It was a striking testimony to what could be done by collective action under intelligent guidance. To the same category belongs the 'International Union in aid of distressed populations' originated by Senator Ciraolo, chairman of the Italian Red Cross. It was started in 1927, and embodies a splendid idea which will doubtless be taken up by the League of Nations when it has been transformed into a League of Peoples, and, war being definitely out of its ambit, it will have nothing to do but deal with 'disastrous' and 'unfore-

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seen' catastrophes. The new Union, launched in 1932, has not yet had an opportunity of doing anything.

IV—SOCIAL

Numerous inquiries have been held and action taken, notably the determined attempt to stamp out the traffic in drugs, especially opium. In 1912 the question of international control had been examined at The Hague Conference. In 1919 it had been raised again at the Peace Conference and the League of Nations had been charged not only with the supervision of the opium traffic but also with the control of all narcotic drugs in every country—cocaine, heroin, morphine, and their substitutes. Their use had become widespread since the war in spite of the appointment of a Commission. In 1925 there was a new convention; in 1930 a second Commission, on which twenty-two countries were represented; and in 1931 a second convention, which prescribed regulations for production and the authorized consumption of narcotics for medical and scientific purposes. A Permanent Central Committee was set up to prevent accumulation of stocks and smuggling. It held inquiries in China, Persia, and India. The last agreed to reduce its production by 10 per cent.; but in French Indo-China there was the difficulty that the excise duty on opium was so profitable that the sale of the drug could not be restricted without putting the whole machinery of administration out of gear. The good intentions of the League have not been able to put a stop to the international smuggling of opium.

Nevertheless there is no denying that the League had an

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admirable programme for the general improvement of the standard of living, in pursuance of which an international public health organization was established in 1923 consisting of a committee of twenty that met twice a year, a consultative council appointed by the Permanent Committee of the International Public Health Department, and, lastly, an executive that formed an integral part of the Secretariat. These bodies drafted the reports to be submitted to the various Governments in accordance with the material provided by the Epidemiological Information Department, the Far East Bureau at Singapore, and the International Leprosy Bureau. Here was a real attempt to combat disease, epidemic and endemic—cholera, tuberculosis, cancer, smallpox, syphilis, and insanity. It can be assumed that, apart from the vast amount of valuable information supplied, the close co-operation between the central body at Geneva and the public health services of the various countries have yielded practical results in respect of malaria and leprosy. Similarly with infantile mortality. The fact that much has still to be done is the best of reasons for recognizing the much that has been done.

Another social problem for the League was the trade in women and children. It was first taken up in 1921 and a convention for the protection of young persons was ratified by forty-five States. In 1923 the measure was extended to cover females of full age, in spite of their consent, if it appeared that they were “destined for prostitution in another country.” So far the most substantial result of the fight against prostitution was the documentary and statistical work, the fruit of prolonged, extensive, and costly inquiries in various parts of the world. And that is the main point.

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On the other hand, in 1923 the International Childhood Protection Association, established at Brussels in 1917, was merged in the League of Nations. Here, again, was occasion for minute inquiries and draft conventions relative to the repatriation of children and young persons deserted abroad, minors generally who had been left without parental control. Illegitimacy, assistance of foreign minors, and the minimum marriage age had also to be considered. Work on these questions has not yet got beyond the preliminary stages, except in respect of the minimum legal age for marriage, which has been raised in some countries.

V—ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL

One of the great ideals of the post-war period was world-unity. Alas! All the same we must give Geneva credit for having made a serious attempt to create an international system of communications and a universal code of law. For the former purpose conferences were organized and several committees set up to deal with rail and road transport, inland waterways, harbours, and sea-going traffic. From these resulted the Barcelona Convention (1921) on labour and the Geneva Convention (1923) on port regulations. The Lisbon Convention embodied a scheme of uniform buoyage, coast lighting, tonnage measurement, &c., but, so far, it remains on paper.

The codification of international law was bound to be more complicated and controversial. Before the war European thought had already been moving in that direction and, consequently, it was natural that the League, anxious to hasten

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the formation of a juridical tie between States, should buckle to the task. In 1924, on the motion of a Swedish delegate, it set up a committee of experts. After several years of preliminary studies the first Conference for actual business met on 13th March, 1930. The agenda consisted of the questions of nationality, territorial waters, and State responsibility. On the first point it was agreed that both sexes should be on exactly the same footing; on the second point that riverine States should have sovereignty over their coastal waters; on the third point (State responsibility) the Conference could not find any common ground.

From 1928 there had been in existence a body whose task was to "harmonize and co-ordinate the private law of different countries or groups of countries and gradually to prepare the way for the adoption by the several countries of a uniform body of legislation." A wide variety of subjects was submitted to it for review—international trade contracts, private arbitrations, liability for family maintenance, and the law of author and publisher—a whole pavement of good intentions.

VI—INTELLECTUAL

Here was by far the greatest scope for interminable talker-talkee of commissions and sub-commissions. An umpteenth body called 'Intellectual Co-operation,' with its headquarters in Paris, was born in November, 1925, of an old notion dear to Léon Bourgeois. Bourgeois had first formulated it in 1921 with the idea that the collaboration of the pick of the brains of the civilized world in science, art, and the technics was the best way of engendering, by means of an appropriate

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education, the international mind, which is the first condition of the peace mind. By 1922 an *ad hoc* Commission had come into existence.

So far this body has confined its activity to palavers on material supplied by investigations all over the world, the professed object being to ascertain the general state of intellectual life and the various possibilities of an improved intellectual organization. Whence a flood of bibliographical publications and elaborate dissertations, schemes for the reorganization of public libraries, with an international information bureau; the publication of museum catalogues; better protection of scientific, literary and artistic property; educational films; revision of history school-books by purging them of the war virus, &c. In short, there is enough to keep the Conformist Mandarins occupied to their last breath and at the same time provide them with comfortable sinecures.

VII—THE PALAIS DES NATIONS

To the credit side of the League account we must add the building of the famous Palais des Nations. This mighty and magnificent pile in the Ariana Park, for size and splendour, puts the Versailles of Louis XIV in all his glory completely in the shade. With its 1650 windows and 1000 sets of offices, and covering an area of 150 metres by 90 metres, it offers to the astonished eye a style of architecture that is as harmonious as one might expect from the sifting of 500 designs worked out in every capital of the world and blended by a jury of five architects. The Library alone, the gift of Rockefeller, cost at least 25 million francs. It has room for two million volumes,

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and the pride of place in it will be given to the publications of the League, which up to date number 3037 and deal with the whole range of human knowledge from trypanosomiasis to whale-fishing.

Over and above the 150 million francs sunk in stone, steel, and concrete, the nations have vied with one another in assembling the finest furniture collection in the world. Holland has decorated the offices of the Secretary-General and his assistants with precious woodwork. The doors are of highly polished steel—the same steel as guns! And I must not forget the restaurant on the roof-garden, which commands a magnificent view of the Lake and the Alps.

Only the Great Hall for meetings of the Assembly has still to be completed, but it will be ready by the end of the year. Let us hope that this gorgeous Ariana Palace, which has not yet been opened and where so far only the Secretariat has been installed, will not meet with the same fate that in 1914 caused the first Temple of Peace at The Hague to close its doors!

VIII—THE LEAGUE MUST LIVE

This is the moral of all the examples I have quoted. Immense labour, unbounded good will towards every cause save that of peace, for which the League was created—such is the story of these fifteen years of continuous but scattered effort. The way has been paved for the future: the main lines of work are apparent, and the means of carrying it to a successful conclusion are there.

The International Labour Office, hitherto paralysed by patronal influence, offers the proletariat the promise of a really

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creative Parliament. The former Hôtel des Nations and its annexe are waiting on the Quai Wilson for the installation within their walls of a Permanent Conference of the Economic Federation of Europe. At the Ariana Palace a stronger, more active, in short, a more human League may yet restore the balance of Europe and work for the new world order.

CHAPTER II

DEBIT

So much for the good the League has tried to do when circumstances permitted; let us now, fairly and squarely, examine the debit side.

I—THE ORIGINAL BURDEN

Just recall the situation in 1919: Europe emerging exhausted from the war of Civilization and Law; the whole universe still rocking after the upheaval, the most hideous in all history; the Peace Conference a seething cauldron of lusts and enmities, a relentless struggle of conflicting interests; as leaders in the game two hard-boiled statesmen, the Briton and the Frenchman, hand in glove against the American idealist. That was the medley from which the League of Nations emerged. In the view of the British and French Governments, then the ruling Powers, the League was only to be what it in fact became, a political instrument for the purpose of perpetuating their victory. Washington and New York saw the situation in its true colours and abandoned the Wilsonian conception to its fate. Nevertheless, such was the urge towards international peace among the peoples that, hybrid as it was with its directorate of Great Powers and its agglomeration of Little Powers that were theoretically but not in fact equals, the nascent League was hailed by all as if it were a living person animated by the new spirit, the incarna-

tion of justice and the symbol of solidarity. Vain hope! It was only a bundle of national egoisms: it had been built on no foundation: its makers had begun at the wrong end. How could the United States of the World survive in face of the Disunited States of Europe? To the initial error of establishing the *status quo* as a dogma when life is a perpetual flux, all the other blunders can be traced. This book has set them out in detail. It is enough to recall the chief ones—the bankruptcy of disarmament and the adulteration of pure justice to suit the taste of the stronger. I return to this point only in order to show briefly whither this betrayal of trust has led us.

II—DISASTROUS PART PLAYED BY THE RULING POWERS AT THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Since 1919 the grip of steel has not for a moment relaxed its hold on the nations. On the contrary, each year its hold has grown tighter and more far-reaching. Just as the delegations of the Great Powers would not undertake not to augment their national defences, so the Little Powers were not concerned to see the prohibition of the traffic on which theirs depended. Does not the Covenant itself, while inviting the Council to report on the evil effects of the private manufacture and trade in arms, “take into consideration the needs of those members which cannot manufacture the munitions or weapons necessary for their security?” It is the official recognition of the armaments traffic. In vain the peoples will demand its suppression; Governments will go on supporting it until by a revolutionary upheaval we have a radical modification of the structure of States and a change of heart in the League of Nations.

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Hence, through not having dared, desired, or had the power to proceed to the disarmament contemplated in the Covenant itself, its interpreters have given the signal for the most formidable armaments race that world lunacy has ever tolerated. Born of fear and begetting fear, a morbid psychosis has taken possession of all the nations, which, imagining they are guaranteeing their security by super-arming, are only thereby precipitating the disaster they seek to avoid. Everywhere we see the helpless masses crushed beneath the weight of swollen military budgets. Unemployment is increasing; poverty is spreading; crime is rife; bankruptcies multiply. Each country is stifling itself with high Protection when it ought to be throwing down its tariff barriers and letting in the fresh air of Free Trade. Even a planned economy is a futile remedy in the hands of a Hitlerian or Fascist dictator. The democracies have shown no greater skill at the helm. Cooped up within their frontiers, we see in every country an unruly or desperate younger generation hungry for bread or adventures. The Old World is rushing faster and faster towards the abyss.

We were not shocked to hear on the wireless that 1936 was to see a further general increase of several milliards in the Minotaur's food bill: for the United States a supplementary expenditure of 231,000,000 dollars, without counting the vast sum that it is going to cost America, like Britain, to increase and recondition its navy and air force. That is the result of the breakdown of the London Naval Conference.

With the problem of Germany and the principle of national and international law which it involves, we reach the Gordian knot that has shackled the past and threatens to strangle the

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present and future of the League of Nations. The principle of law has not been impartially applied, as may be seen from two glaring examples: (1) the war between Bolivia and Paraguay was allowed to go on for three years without any attempt on the part of the League Council to determine the aggressor; (2) similarly with the five years' conflict between China and Japan. In spite of the bombardment of Shanghai and the annexation of Manchukuo the League showed no inclination to indict the aggressor, but remained snugly entrenched behind Article 15. When, after an inquiry, the Lytton Report put the facts beyond doubt, the Assembly contented itself with a simple recommendation, of which Japan took no notice. The thunderbolts of law were waiting for a more favourable opportunity; but when in due course Article 16 was invoked against Mussolini, it gave forth mere stage thunder. Sanctionist zeal, however, was not damped. Better luck next time! At least a precedent had been created.

History will regard the ostracism of Germany from 1919 as the head and front of the League's offending. Satisfactory Franco-German relations are the foundation of the stability of Europe and, through Europe, of the world, but towards creating them the League has done absolutely nothing. It could have brought about the co-operation of the two great countries in the economic restoration of Europe, but, fearing to encroach upon the ground on which the victors had encamped, it has left the latter free to do as they please. Geneva made no move during the Ruhr occupation. The credit for Locarno belongs to Stresemann and Briand: all the League did was to put the document on the file.

If the frightful catastrophe which threatens the world is to be

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avoided, there is but one solution, and it must be adopted at once. There must be an agreed revision of colonial mandates. France survived the cession of Canada to the British and the sale of Louisiana to the Americans. Would it be fatal to Britain to make some sacrifice in Central and South Africa for the sake of the peace of Europe? Clearly any negotiations of this sort would have to be conducted within the framework of the League, or, perhaps, one should say the League would register them when the Chancellories concerned had reached agreement on all points, including the protection of the natives—whether fetishists, Catholics, Jews, or Mohammedans.

The reconciliation of Germany with the League is the *sine qua non* of European peace, and that, of course, cannot come to pass without the close co-operation of Russia, Britain, France and, presently, Italy, who has, luckily, not yet given up her permanent seat on the Council.

CHAPTER III

EPILOGUE

WHEN writing this book, I never thought that my predictions, as far as the remilitarization of the Rhine is concerned, would be realized so quickly. Still less did I think that, despite the prophecies of the experts, the Italians would be so promptly and so completely victorious in Abyssinia.

In following here the repercussions which these two striking events have had on Geneva from the beginning of March to the beginning of July, I shall show how unhappily I was right when I prophesied that the League would only be able to survive after the fashion of the phoenix, which, according to the myth, had first to fall into ashes before it could be reborn.

I—THE OCCUPATION OF THE RHINE AND THE JOURNEY TO LONDON

On 7th March there were called to the Wilhelmstrasse the Ambassadors of France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Italy, guarantors of the Locarno Treaty. Neither in London nor in Paris were the initiated ignorant of the Führer's plans. Was he uneasy about the consequences of the Franco-Soviet Treaty which had just been ratified? Yet, at the very first, he had not thought it irreconcilable with the 1925 agreements signed by Briand, Austen Chamberlain, Stresemann, and Mussolini. Why then should he denounce it without warning.

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The Duce's successful 'coup' in Abyssinia, the impunity of his aggression in spite of the derisory application of Article 16, the divergence of the views of the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay, in sum, the evident impotence of the League, these, much more than the pretext of Franco-Soviet and Czechoslovak encirclement, were the reasons, if not moral at least material, for the German resurrection.

During the morning of that historic day, the four Locarno Powers were advised by their Berlin representatives of the unilateral repudiation of the last vestige of the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles.

At noon Adolph Hitler gave in the Reichstag that famous broadcast speech* in which, justifying the occupation of the Rhine by President Wilson's Fourteen Points (accepted and then violated by the victors), he offered France and Belgium to commence negotiations for the creation of a reciprocal demilitarized zone, to guarantee the integrity of their Western Frontiers, and to conclude a Pact of Non-Aggression which would last for twenty-five years.

During the afternoon the detachments of the Reichswehr were making their entry into the towns of the Rhineland. A symbolic occupation, the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, Baron von Neurath, assured M. Poncet—in all, nineteen battalions of infantry with full war equipment, acroplanes, and numerous batteries of artillery . . .

At Mayence and Frankfurt, at Coblenz, Karlsruhe, and Cologne, the troops were acclaimed by the crowds which

* A verbatim report of this speech is contained in "Locarno," A Collection of Documents. Edited by Dr. F. J. Berber. Hodge, 1936.

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thronged the beflagged streets. In the eyes of the Third Reich not a menace to the security of France, but only a guarantee of security for Germany.

While in Paris there was a lively feeling of indignation, in London the general sentiment was only concerned with the principle, disrespect for an engagement voluntarily taken; in fact, no comparison with the Italian aggression and its threat to the Imperial trade routes. The German armies were invading Germany, that was all . . .

The alarm in France was so great, that at the Cabinet meeting which was held on the evening of the 7th, one talked of nothing less in the way of reprisals than of mobilizing three classes and of throwing the covering divisions into the Saar. In the evening of the 8th when Bonn, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Dusseldorf were occupied in their turn, Albert Sarraut broadcast a bellicose appeal to the French people, calling the world to witness that Strasbourg could not remain under the German canon and that France would not consent to sign its abdication and subordination (*sic*).

For a moment one would have thought that the war of prevention, desired by some, was on the point of being declared. Happily the wisdom of the Chief of the General Staff calmed the ministerial effervescence, which spent itself in the dispatch of a comminatory SOS to the League and in beginning talks with London with a view to joint action, from which it was all too evident that Rome, in the dock at Geneva, would hold aloof.

Meanwhile the agitated Little Entente suggested the formation of a defensive front, and Mr. Eden declared in the House of Commons that the reoccupation of the Rhine had shaken

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confidence in any agreement that the German Government might enter into in the future. Peace, he added, is not seriously threatened, but Britain would hold herself bound in honour to go to the aid of the country attacked.

Just as if she really feared this improbable eventuality, France had immediately mobilized and put on a war footing the defences of the Maginot Line. Troops were garrisoned in the deep subterranean works of the forts—a line of defence considered even in Germany as impregnable and also as a base for a possible invasion. The Parisian press frankly admitted the thoughts at the back of their heads: the remilitarization of the Rhine deprived the French armies of the possibility of transforming German territory into an eventual battlefield.

Just as after the fall of Napoleon III, William I only claimed Alsace-Lorraine in order to remove the scene of revenge from his own territory, so the negotiators of the Treaty of Versailles, not having been able to get Britain and America to agree to the annexation of the Rhineland, had to content themselves with forcing on the conquered a large demilitarized zone which put Saarebrücken within range of the cannon of Metz, Strasbourg, Kehl, and Karlsruhe.

Violation of the Treaty of Versailles, Articles 42 and 43, violation of the Locarno Pact, these were the arguments put forward by the Quai d'Orsay to obtain immediate reparation.

On 10th March Albert Sarraut spoke in the Chamber of Deputies of "the outrage against international justice, collective security, and the organization of peace . . . It is the fate of the League which is at stake." The same day the

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representatives of the signatories to the Locarno Pact met in Paris. The divergence of their points of view was striking.

On the 12th they met again in London; M. Flandin breathed fire and flame when he learned of the German proposal: the troops of the Reich will withdraw into the towns away from the frontier on condition that the French troops do the same. The tension grew. In the Senate the Franco-Soviet Pact was, by way of protest, immediately ratified.

On the 13th an emergency meeting of the League Council was convened at St. James's Palace. M. Flandin and M. Paul-Boncour rallied to M. van Zeeland's proposals of compromise. On the 14th the Council began its deliberations. M. Flandin expounded that Germany was, however, invited to take part in the deliberations: on the 15th she made it known that she would only accept if she was accorded full equality of rights with the Powers of the Council and if her pacific offers were discussed as a whole. M. Flandin rejoined that on these conditions France would prefer to leave the League.

On the 16th the Council granted the first demand of the Reich and refused the second: the peace proposals made by the Führer and reiterated in two public speeches were not within its competence. On the 17th the Locarnoites, now reduced to three (France, Britain, and Belgium; sanctioned Italy holding aloof), continued the debate. France demanded that the question of the Franco-Soviet Pact's compatibility with Locarno should be submitted to The Hague Tribunal. M. Litvinov denounced the peril of Hitlerism in the Council: Germany, as is shown in *Mein Kampf*, aims at dominating the Continent. In the evening there was a new meeting of the divided Locarnoites, while at Cologne, General Goering

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declared that the German Army would never evacuate the Rhineland.

On the 18th Mr. Eden declared in the Council that the violation of the Rhine was not a threat of imminent hostilities and did not entail the immediate action foreseen at Locarno. M. Titulesco replied that if unilateral repudiation of treaties might occur without entailing any consequences, that would be the end of the League. Continuing his tour for the plebiscite, the Führer affirmed that nothing in the world could make him go back on what had been done. As a "herald of peace" he extended his hand to France and the other nations.

On the morning of the 19th Herr von Ribbentrop, who had arrived by air the evening before, presented himself at St. James's Palace. There was a long and dignified speech in favour of the German thesis: legitimacy of the remilitarization of the Rhine, renewed offers for a twenty-five years' peace and consecutive disarmament. An instructive photograph shows us the attitudes of the members of the Council during this meeting: M. Flandin is proud and stiff; M. Litvinov is reading a paper; and Mr. Eden is conciliatory.

An agreement was reached between the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay: in the case of unprovoked aggression the French and Belgian frontiers would be guaranteed by Great Britain. In a series of conversations the General Staffs were to study the modalities to be taken in such a case. At the same time the Foreign Office handed to Herr von Ribbentrop a draft agreement; it anticipated the Reich's obligation to submit to the arbitration of The Hague on the Franco-Soviet Pact; the creation of a demilitarized zone of 20 kilometres in German territory to be occupied by international contingents

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as long as the negotiations lasted; and, finally, their undertaking not to augment their effectives nor raise fortifications in the rest of the Rhine provinces.

It was obviously a purely formal satisfaction given by London to the exigencies of irritated France. Purely formal was also the blame voted unanimously that afternoon by the Council of the League. Chile alone abstained from voting. The Geneva Aeropagus had not wished to commit itself further, leaving, as usual, the rival suitors to settle their differences among themselves.

That same evening M. Flandin returned to Paris leaving M. Paul-Boncour at London to follow the affair which was going to fritter itself away. Herr von Ribbentrop, temporizing, also remained some days in London, which had been deserted by the members of the Council immediately after its adjournment *sine die*. Once again the League of Nations had ratified, without further reaction, the *fait accompli*. Thanks to British prudence, the war for the Rhine, which had threatened for a moment, had been prevented.

II—EXCHANGE OF 'MEMORANDA'—ITALIAN VICTORY IN ETHIOPIA—GENEVA POWERLESS

The Sarraut-Flandin Government, however, did not consider itself beaten.

On the 24th the Wilhelmstrasse gave London its definite reply to the draft agreement imposed by Paris: refusal to go to The Hague; refusal to withdraw the German troops from the Rhine; refusal to negotiate on a footing of inequality. At

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the same time in town after town—in Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Essen, Cologne—the Führer before audiences roused to a state of fanaticism reiterates his justification and his pacific intentions. On the 29th, the day fixed for the referendum in the Third Reich, M. Flandin made an aggressive speech at Vezelay. In strong terms he stigmatized German militarism and “the dangers which it makes peace run”; Germany by violating the treaties set herself up against the rest of the world. Setting himself up as an examining magistrate, the spokesman of France put questions couched in a tone quite foreign to Chancelleries. The reply is given that very evening by the German people. Out of 43,880,463 votes recorded, 43,353,186 (nearly 99 per cent.) gave their entire approbation to the Führer. The whole of Germany, satisfied with the reconquered equality of rights, was massed behind its guide.

On 1st April Herr von Ribbentrop, back again in London, presented the Reich's counter-proposals to the Franco-Anglo-Belgian note of 19th March. It was, in sum, a complete reorganization of Europe and the substitution of a new régime for that which had been set up by the Treaty of Versailles. Pacts of non-aggression for twenty-five years were offered to all Germany's immediate neighbours. The negotiations were subordinated to a programme in twenty-seven points of which the following are the principal features: reciprocal truce between the presses of France and Germany so that relations between the two peoples should cease to be poisoned; separation of the Covenant from the treaties; system of arbitration for the control of agreements eventually arrived at; international commission to superintend the provisional neutral zone; the meeting of a conference for the limitation of arma-

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ments, to be followed, for popular ratification, by a plebiscite in France, Germany, and Belgium.

Received in London with favourable prejudice, which did not exclude the confirmation of the British Government's impartiality and resolve to stay a guarantor of Locarno and not to become an arbitrator, the German memorandum of 31st March received nothing but indirect replies from the French Government. One, sent to London in the form of a new requisition, discussed the German thesis from the juridical point of view and made every reservation regarding the system of fortifications which the Reich was constructing in the Rhine provinces; the other, addressed to Geneva, consisted of a vast plan, so-called constructive, for European peace within the framework of the League.

Of the German proposal it retained only one figure: the twenty-five years of stability offered, yet based them on the two principles whose fantastical side recent events had once again brought to light: the obligation of mutual assistance and the creation of an international force. Other ideas, no less noble theoretically, were developed in it. Thus the gulf between Paris and Berlin, far from being reduced, was getting deeper and deeper.

In April Mr. Eden and M. Flandin met again at Geneva, where the Committee of Thirteen, after its flight from London, had regained the shelter of its roof. Then it appeared that between Paris and London also a gulf, just as regrettable, had formed. The Quai d'Orsay was only occupied with the eternal Franco-German dispute and wanted the Foreign Office to take up its quarrel; inversely the Foreign

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Office reproached the Quai d'Orsay with its lukewarmness in the Italo-Ethiopian adventure.

The fact was that since the beginning of March the aspect of things in Abyssinia had been singularly modified. After a period, during which they halted in the positions they had just conquered, the armies of Marshal Badoglio and General Graziani vigorously took up the offensive again in the Makale sector and the North Ogaden. In vain the Negus sent repeated appeals to London and the League of Nations. The Italians won great victories at Amba Alagi and in the Harrar district. Meantime, the columns preceded by the murderous yperite kept advancing without stop, occupying Gondar and Lake Tsana. Thus the source of the Blue Nile was threatened. Then came the battle of Lake Axianghi and that of Dessie, where Haile Selassie, commanding in person, was crushed. The road to Addis Ababa was open.

Contrary to the forecasts of the military experts, Rome was near to reaching its goal before the rainy season. Feeling at Geneva ran high. The Committee of Thirteen on two occasions made representations to the belligerents—without success. In vain the conquered Negus ordered a mass mobilization and demanded that the League of Nations should impose peace. The conquering Duce refused to treat with an Emperor without power. What was Geneva going to decide?

M. Flandin, having eyes only for the Rhine, pleaded in favour of the Duce whom he wanted to lead back into the Stresa Front; Mr. Eden, having eyes only for the Nile, listens coldly to the French recriminations against Berlin. A new meeting was called for the 16th. This time M. Flandin was

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engaged elsewhere and Paul-Boncour acted in his place. The dissension between London and Paris grew. The Negus demanded the integral application of sanctions (petrol). Italy, in private conversations, gave it to be understood through her representative, Baron Aloisi, that—without caring about the League—she would treat directly with Ethiopia when the time came. The hostilities went on to the end.

After a secret session the Council of Thirteen adjourned till 11th May without having taken any decision. On the 17th there was the last meeting, taking note of the complete breakdown of the negotiations. This was tantamount to giving the aggressor *carte blanche* to finish his conquest. Mussolini immediately gave the assurance that after that he would be ready to “collaborate as a loyal member of the League in its works”; and Mr. Baldwin announced that “he will conform to its decisions, British policy not being anti-Italian.”

Then on the 20th the Council of Thirteen, which had again become the Council of the League by the presence of the fourteenth member (Italy reappearing on the scene), voted . . . a theoretical vote of censure to whose softened wording Baron Aloisi had contributed, and then the members dispersed to wait on events stronger than the will of man. To put it crudely, the impotence and dissension of Geneva had been revealed once again.

However, in London they were anxious about the form in which the Flandin requisition, a new edition of his Vezelay speech, should be sent to Berlin. First, one must not insist upon the irritating question of fortifications in the Rhineland; then one should confine oneself to asking for some preciser

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information as to the significance of the offer of non-aggression for twenty-five years; does Germany consider that she has achieved equality of rights? Does she demand the return of all her former colonies or only of some of them? There was no hurry to send this gracious note.

At the moment the Foreign Office was preoccupied solely with the Italian advance on Addis Ababa, which, though hampered by the rains and the last rearguard fighting of the Ethiopians, was being pushed on with determination, the while that Graziani's army was developing the great and victorious battle which, after a fierce struggle, broke the last line of Ethiopian resistance, the fortified line constructed by the Turkish general, Nahil Pasha, and defended by Ras Nasibu.

These tidings were received in Britain with dismay. The Labour Party grew angry. Lord Lytton, in the name of the League of Nations Union, demanded the petrol embargo and the closing of all Mediterranean ports to Italian shipping, and if these measures should prove insufficient, the blocking of the Suez Canal. Lord Stanhope, in the House of Commons, declared that sanctions must be continued "to show the world that war does not pay."

France, absorbed in her general election (26th April and 3rd May), was also divided into sanctionist and non-sanctionist camps—the former, unrepentant idealists, ready to risk a holy war against the dictatorships; the latter, realistic supporters of negotiation and understanding.

While feeling was rising on both sides of the Channel, decisive events were taking place in Africa. A motor column thrust at Addis Ababa whither the Negus, deserted by his last

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troops and betrayed by the Rassas, had returned as a fugitive only to escape next day to Djibuti by special train, with his family, several faithful chiefs and 145 treasure chests. For five days the capital was abandoned to pillage. Deserters and robbers burned and looted. The Italians were awaited as deliverers. The foreign legations were in danger. At last at four in the afternoon of 5th May, the victors made their entry and immediately restored order. After stopping a night at Djibuti, the Negus and his party embarked on H.M.S. "Enterprise," of the India Division. He reached Jerusalem *via* Haifa.

The Chancelleries were in utter confusion. Austria, having decided to impose compulsory military service—a characteristic violation of the Treaty of St. Germain—addressed to all the Powers a memorandum justifying her action. The Foreign Office, after mature consideration and repeated redrafting, forwarded the Franco-British questionnaire to Berlin. On the same day (7th May), in spite of the enormous majority given by the electors to the Popular Front, the Sarraut Government decided to remain in office in accordance with the strict letter of the Constitution. The Council of the Little Entente and the Balkan Federation, consisting of the ministers for foreign affairs, met at Belgrade. Perturbed after the Italian victory by Austria's action and the political and commercial treaties lately concluded between Vienna, Budapest, and Rome (the renewal on 23rd March, 1936, of the agreements of 1935), Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, and Roumania joined together for collective security and to resist the Hapsburg restoration that was once more in prospect. Greece, in the event of a

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conflict, meant to remain neutral. Turkey took the first diplomatic steps for the remilitarization of the Straits.

On 9th May the expected *coup de théâtre* took place. From the balcony of his Palazzo Venezia, the Duce announced to the delirious Roman crowds the proclamation of the new Roman Empire—Victor-Emmanuel, Emperor and King, was to reign over Ethiopia. Marshal Badoglio was appointed Viceroy and General Graziani promoted marshal.

On 11th May the League Council met in utter confusion. As usual secret sessions are arranged in the lobbies. The general muddle was even worse than in the previous month. The neutrals had their own private conference, trying to come to some agreement, but all in vain. Britain was not disposed to bow before the *fait accompli*. France, represented by her former Government, which had lost all its authority, wanted to raise sanctions but did not dare. Ecuador and Chile declared for the repeal of measures that had become pointless and could now only be a source of irritation. Wishing to bring back the weight of Italy into the anti-German coalition, the U.S.S.R. spoke in the same sense. Argentina, demanding a definite attitude, was opposed to any further adjournment. Everyone felt that Ethiopia was doomed; her representative weeps, burying his face in his hands. The upshot was that in public session the Council decided that it decided nothing; sanctions were maintained as a matter of form; and the Italian delegation at once left Geneva. Will it ever come back? The Council adjourned until 16th June.

One cruel remark sums up this appalling situation. At the League of Nations there is no burying—only embalming.

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III—EUROPE IN FERMENT—THE ARGENTINE INTERVENTION— PARIS AND LONDON ON TERMS—THE ASSEMBLY OF 30TH JUNE

A period of uncertainty and anxiety began such as Europe had not known since the dark summer of 1914. Austria had a *coup d'état*. Chancellor von Schuschnigg, after a visit from Sir Austen Chamberlain, terminated his partnership in power with Prince Starhemberg. The Chief of the Heimwehr was to marry the sister of the Archduke Otto, this last, the claimant to the throne, being promised (it was said) an Italian princess. Von Schuschnigg, champion of his country's independence, proclaimed a united patriotic front and merged the old militias in the new army.

A fortnight later, it is true, he suddenly left for Italy and met the Duce at Roca delle Caminate. Rome and Vienna announced their accord, though it was not yet known if Berlin, to which the Duce was making overtures, was in the game.

A ministerial crisis in Poland made little change in the calculating attitude of Warsaw. Colonel Beck paid a surprise visit to Belgrade. Which side is Jugoslavia taking? The answer will be given by the establishment there of a Krupp factory after the commercial tournée of Dr. Schacht, the financial dictator of the Third Reich, in the Balkan capitals. Thanks to the barter system, Germany is extending her influence in Roumania and even in Greece.

The question that is being asked from Prague to Angora is, what will France's new policy be? Will she remain faithful to her old engagements? Léon Blum, at a luncheon given by the American Club on 15th May, affirmed in the

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clearest terms the future Government's desire for peace. He wished to be on good terms with all nations for the sake of his internal policy.

On the same date Hitler, on being reminded by the British Ambassador that the British Government were awaiting a reply to their memorandum, temporized. At the moment his chief concern was the meaning of the French elections. He would contrive to put off replying until the next meeting of the Assembly. The more time he gained, the more his armaments would grow—for any eventuality—and his diplomacy could manœuvre. In London the struggle went on between the 100 per cent. Covenant men and the practical statesmen. In vain did Lord Cecil and Major Atlee display an evangelistic zeal worthy of the League of Nations of the future. Knowing the gaps in the present structure, the British Cabinet came back to an exact appreciation of the facts.

Meanwhile the spectre of the lost cause, the Negus, left Jerusalem for Gibraltar, where the authorities fêted him, and London, where, in spite of a courteous reception, he was made to realize the completeness of his fall. His treasure, fortunately, followed him.

In Paris foreign affairs for the moment receded into the background. Without waiting for the Government of the Popular Front to get into working order, the metal workers unexpectedly went on strike, and soon every industry was involved. Fifteen thousand workers, "stay-in" strikers, occupied the factories. The way in which the movement was carried out was distinguished by a discipline and dignity as surprising as the scale on which it was effected. It was no

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mere incident like other strikes, but the beginning of a social revolution. With remarkable resolution the new President of the Council during the night of 8th June brought the employers and the workers to accept the principle of the new laws, viz., recognition of the trade unions, collective bargaining, increase of wages, holidays with pay, and a forty-hour week—radical innovations that were at once endorsed by Parliamentary good will in both Chamber and Senate. The strikes gradually died down; calm was restored; order had not been disturbed.

Strengthened by this success and with their official declarations endorsed by their big Parliamentary majority, Léon Blum and his Foreign Minister were enabled to appear with authority at Geneva where the Council had been definitely summoned to meet on 26th June, and the Assembly, at the special request of Argentina, on 30th June.

With a foresight for which the Conservative Government cannot be sufficiently praised, Great Britain had gradually come round to the view that to persist in sanctions would be 'madness.' Its leaders, in spite of the rage of the Labour Opposition, which saw its noble dream of equity shattered, rose one after another to declare that they had overestimated the coercive strength of the League of Nations. (It was a sign of the times that Sir Samuel Hoare, who but lately had been sacrificed to the cult of 'sanctionism,' now returned to office as First Lord of the Admiralty). Following Sir Austen Chamberlain and Mr. Winston Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Neville Chamberlain) and the Foreign Secretary (Mr. Eden) confirmed that more had been asked of the Geneva organization than it could give. In view of the

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evident check to the sanctions policy and the bankruptcy of collective security, there was nothing for it but to change direction and to try to save what was possible of the League and the Covenant—a readiness to face facts which was not without greatness.

While anxious to see Germany, Britain, and France seated at the same table and trying to come to an agreement by mutual concessions, Mr. Baldwin was also anxious to set up a Mediterranean Pact in which Italy could participate. Signor Grandi had a meeting with Mr. Eden, and the City seemed willing to consider a colonial loan to Rome.

Hence was elaborated a British security (*i.e.*, peace) plan superimposed on the Hitler and French plans. While the French plan contemplated nothing less than confronting the eventual aggression with the three Europes (Western, Central, and Eastern) through the medium of regional pacts of mutual assistance (described as collective security and indivisible peace), Britain, less ambitiously and doubtless more wisely, was content with an assurance limited to Western Europe through an agreement with Holland, Belgium, and France, without prejudice to a possible understanding with Berlin and Rome—in fact, a kind of stronger Four-Power Pact, friendly to the U.S.S.R., but not involving London in any military intervention in favour of Central and Eastern Europe.

These considerations, however, were dependent on the raising of sanctions if not the recognition *de jure* of the Italian conquest. It is notorious that chancelleries can manage very well with the *de facto*. There are countries that to this day

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do not officially recognize the U.S.S.R.—a typical example of this world's hypocrisy.

On the matter of sanctions at least Paris and London fortunately found themselves in agreement before the meetings which would probably seal the fate of the League of Nations.

When, in the autumn, the Disunited States of Europe were to meet in conference once more—this time having to choose between coming to an understanding and reducing the League to a kind of consultative council and registration bureau—they were to face the prospect of a second League of Nations, the Panamerican, being in existence.

Already, as from 11th May, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua had resigned from the League, and others were about to follow suit. There was no doubt that, at the Congress to be held in the summer at Buenos Aires, the Argentine could count on the support of all the South American States, in whose eyes "victory confers no rights." This was the principle of the *Pacto Americano* signed at Rio-de-Janeiro by thirty-two States (*including Italy!*). Its projector, Dr. Saavedra Lamas, Argentine Foreign Minister, had insisted on the doctrine that no war could be followed by territorial annexations.

There was an even chance, therefore, that at an early date the United States of South America, approaching in philosophic doctrine the United States of North America, would in future be no more than corresponding members of the parent League, now that it was become, in Edouard Herriot's phrase, a kind of "billiards academy."

There is, however, one new fact in which there is no

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cause for anything but satisfaction, having regard to the chaos of darkness into which the old League of Nations has plunged Europe while disintegrating the world. I refer to the sequel to the famous dinner at the Auberge du Vieux Bois in Haute-Savoie, at which M. Blum and Mr. Eden met—the accord reached between the British and French points of view. As at the famous Toiry luncheon great countries took stock of their mutual interests: the two western democracies sought with equal sincerity the establishment of the peace that alone can lighten the crushing burden of armaments that weighs upon the nations suffering from the universal crisis. There was agreement on the main lines—pacts of mutual assistance involving, if need be, military action. The latter would be followed (provided agreement could be reached on the amendment of the Covenant) by economic and financial sanctions against any aggressor, which should be applied unanimously by all the League members. For this purpose all that would be needed was the amendment of Articles 11 and 16 of the Covenant.

Can the congenital weaknesses of the League constitution be cured in this way? One can but hope so for the sake of the future and the honour of humanity. But how, in the dismal uncertainty of the present, can one fail to remain sceptical after the tragic lesson of the past? Will the new orientation of French policy and the good intentions of the French Socialist Government prevail so as to bring back Germany and Italy into what, before the Sarajevo bomb, was called the Concert of Europe? Poland, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria threaten to draw from the Baltic to the Adriatic what in Berlin is called a *cordon sanitaire* between France

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and the U.S.S.R. Will the twentieth century see civilization crash in the collision of the Holy Roman and German Empires with the 'Holy' Soviet Empire? The fate of the Old World depends on the attitude of British and French democracy.

In Central Europe the Little Entente, in the toils of Nazi propaganda, is frantically looking for some solid ground. The German peril? The Austrian peril? How much Prague, Belgrade and Bucharest are alive to the latter was demonstrated by the conference of the three Governmental chiefs held at Bucharest on 7th and 8th June and the incidental conversations between the three General Staffs. Have not the Succession States declared themselves ready to mobilize in the event of Vienna restoring Otto of Hapsburg?

As to the Montreux Conference of the Powers interested in the remilitarization of the Dardanelles, it cannot, in spite of the courteous procedure followed by Angora, be said to have brought out the slightest sign of international solidarity. While Roumania, bottled up in the Black Sea, was in agreement with the Turkish Government, Britain was wholly opposed to the Russian fleet having free access to the Mediterranean, which France favoured. On the contrary, London had a counter-proposal for a port beyond the Bosphorous. Italy, an absentee from the conference, made express reservations, and Japan, another guarantor of the Treaty of Lausanne, had not said her last word. Would not a military coup, like the occupation of the Rhineland, be better than the red tape of diplomacy?

In this atmosphere of difficult negotiations the session of the Council opened on 26th June. It was wholly taken up with private palavers. The session of the Assembly on

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Wednesday, 30th June, was undoubtedly the most moving of all the historic sittings held at Geneva since the foundation of the League of Nations. The presence of the Negus, a pathetic shadow, was bound to weigh upon the consciences of all those present who in October, 1935, had rallied to his defence and had now to confess ruefully that in this savage world of ours Force still prevails over Right. An Italian memorandum had vainly urged that the case had not been fairly tried and that the judges had been so influenced by political considerations that they had refused to examine at the proper time the whole Italo-Ethiopian dispute and the wrongs alleged by Rome against "a slave-owning and barbarous country" which had failed to honour its engagements. But that was not now the question. The League had now to face the task, highly disagreeable to international sentiment, of squaring the *fait accompli* with the necessity of replacing Italy on the European chessboard. Rome's note on this last point was conciliatory.

A noble speech by Léon Blum was followed by the skilful pleadings of Mr. Eden and M. Litvinov, all three urging, though not all on the same grounds, the necessity for giving the League and the Covenant a fresh lease of life. But when it came to the turn of the second-class Powers to give their views from the tribune, it was obvious that, while there might be a majority for the definitive raising of sanctions, there was nothing but dissension on all other points. Each one felt that faith in the future destinies of the League was extinct; the secession of Latin America seemed imminent and inevitable. In vain M. Yvon Delbos sounded the rally for a last stand round the brave words—regional pacts of mutual assist-

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ance, collective security, indivisible peace. Everyone who troubled to think a moment saw that they really meant pacts of military alliance, collective insecurity, and divided peace.

France, despite Léon Blum's offer to Germany of direct conversations, stuck to its line—the tightening up of what anti-Fascists call "encirclement against the spirit of aggression." Britain, arming against every contingency, was obviously more concerned about the balance of power in the West and the future in the Mediterranean. The divergence is comprehensible in view of the uncertainty in which the morrow is wrapped and the shadow of the double menace of a Germany of ever-increasing military strength and the restless energy of a victorious Italy.

At last, by 49 votes to 44, the Assembly passed the final motion for the raising of sanctions, appointing 15th July as the date for wiping the bloody anguish of the past off the slate. The fundamental problem to be resolved was once more adjourned to the agenda of the autumn session. One of the delegates states the general feeling in this confession: "It was as if we were going round and round a beast in its death-struggles without the pluck to put it out of its pain."

The Assembly dissolved. In the Council the Nazi President of the Danzig Senate banged the table with his fist. The League of Nations, utterly cowed, did not so much as squeak, but left Poland to cope with the situation. It was the final confession of impotence.

Note, further, the Austrian Chancellor's refusal to join in conference with Britain and France.

Where will the storm burst? At Vienna, where the restoration of Otto of Hapsburg is being arranged? At

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Danzig, which is determined to be once more a German town? Or will it be at Memel? The thundercloud darkens the whole Continent.

Whatever happens, the League of Nations, born in 1920, virtually died in the dark month of July, 1936. And thus, in spite of the hope and good will of the peoples, nothing short of a miracle can prevent the fulfilment of the prophecy uttered by Robert Lansing, Wilson's Secretary of State, on the morrow of the unhappy peace of 1919: "War will follow the treaties as surely as night follows day."

But for all that, let us still leave the door ajar for hope.

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